215.

EX LIBRIS
F. S. FERGUSON

Not in (3152*)
3153-5

Ferguson 201

215.

EX LIBRIS
F. S. FERGUSON

Not in (3152*)
3153-5

Ferguson 201

THE

SWORD-MAN'S Vade-mecum:

OR,

A PRESERVATIVE

Against the

SURPRIZE of a SUDDEN ATTAQUE

WITH

SHARPS.

Being a Reduction of the moſt Eſſential, Neceſſary, and Practical part of FENCING; into a few Special Rules, With their Reaſons: Which all SWORD-MEN ſhould have in their Memories when they are to Engadge; but more eſpecially if it be with SHARPS.

With ſome other Remarques and Obſervations, not unfit to be known.

By W. H. *Gentleman.*

EDINBURGH,
Printed by JOHN REID, *Anno DOM.* 1691.

-7 DEC 1965
D
LIBRARY

TO ALL TRUE ARTISTS;

OR

Such who have a Real Reſpect for, and take Delight in the ART of FENCING.

GENTLEMEN,

HEN I Wrote my Book of Fencing, *Entituled* The SCOTS Fencing-Maſter, *I deſigned it ſhould ſerve both to inſtruct the Ignorant, and be a help to Artiſts; to inſtruct the Ignorant by giving them a true and particular Deſcription of the moſt common Leſſons taught in the* Fencing Schools, *that ſo by it they might come to underſtand both better and ſooner, the Leſſons which their Maſters were daily to Deſcrive and Teach them; And I am very confident I have not failed as to that, for I dare appeal to any who ever took the pains to peruſe it, if ever they met with a piece upon the ſame ſubject, either ſo plain, or exact in the Directions for the Leſſons, as it is.*

I deſigned alſo it ſhould be a help to Artiſts, in ſo far as that the looking it over, would bring to their

minds such Lessons, as want of Practice for some time might have worn out of their Memories, and also in respect that there is in it very good directions, and Rules for their behaviour in practice against either Artists or Ignorants, both with Blunts and Sharps.

But in that Book I gave only a bare Discription of the Rules, without any of the Reasons subjoyned to them upon which they were grounded, which ommission did probably make some Artists judge, that those Rules were not so very infallible, but that as good might be put in their places; And which it is like hath also been the cause of their not having so good an Opinion of, and liking for them, as perhaps otherwise they would.

Therefore, that I might both vindicate the certainty and infallibility of my Rules, by showing that they are not grounded meerly upon my own Fancy, but upon the solid Foundations of Art and Reason, and satisfie such persons by publishing the Reasons upon which I ground them; As also, make my Rules more compendious, and easier to be kept in their memories, I have in these following sheets made an Abstract of them, and have given the Reasons, why I order such and such a thing in such a Rule.

And although I cannot deny, but a judicious Artist may perhaps make use of some Rules of his own choise, or making, differing somewhat from mine, which may be very good, and have sometimes as good effect against the particular Play of the Person he is to engage against as mine could have; Yet I am confident

they

they can be no better than mine are, and that if he observed mine exactly against that same Person, he would find them to have the very same effects with his own, and to be against all humors whatsoever generally the more secure and certain of the two.

But albeit I confess there may be particular Rules invented for particular humors of Play, which may differ from mine, and yet prove very effectual against that particular humor for which they were designed; yet against one of another humor they will be altogether Ineffectual and prove stark nought, in which doth consist their insufficiency, whereas those which I am to give you will not only prove as effectual against those particular humors, as the particular Rules designed for them, but will be sufficient also against all humors whatsoever, so that there will be no need of particular Ones, mine supplying their place because they are general, in which doth lye their Worth and Excellency.

For to discover to you the unsufficiency of particular Rules, consider but what difference there is betwixt a Man's playing with a Person whose humor and method of playing he knoweth, and with one whom perhaps he never so much as saw before, certainly there must be Methods taken vastly different to play Advantagiously against either of those Persons as a Man shall be engaged; for if he be Attaqued by a Person whose Play he knoweth, then knowing upon what Lessons his humor runneth; I confess he may safely make use of particular Contrarys, and Pursuits which

he

he knows will take effect upon his Adversary, (although undoubtedly to use generalls were a great dale more safe) but if he be Attaqued by one whom perhaps he never saw, or if he did, yet knoweth not upon what Lessons his humor runneth; I say in such a Case to make use of Particulars were but very bad Judgement.

As for Example, to make a Real and Home Pursuite with a single or double Feint, when no such pursuite will take effect upon that Person again whom he is playing, but what is accompanied with binding; or to take himself to any particular Parrade, when he is not certain what Lesson his Aduersary is to play home upon him; this I say is but to play at Random, and wholly expose himself to Contretemps, by rendering his Art altogether Ineffectual.

And this bad Custom of using alwise Particulars, is certainly one of the main Reasons, why the French *(who are generally of a Brisk and Hot Constitution) ave for the most part when they Engage either both Killed, or at least severly wounded, because immediatly after presenting, they commonly Advance with the particular Pursuite of some single or double Feint, without ever offering to secure their Adversarie's Sword, and their Adversary upon the other Hand, not being accustomed to a general Parrade, and finding he is not certain what particular one he should make use of, endeavours to take time upon him, and so they are both wounded: This is the True* French *Play, which I confess hath a* Bonne grace *with it at*

Blunts,

Blunts, and appears Brisk and Courageous at Sharps; but as to its Security, I leave that to be judged of by any considering Person, whither Artist or other.

Therefore the only secure way is to make alwise use of Generalls against whatever Persons you Play, whither Artists or not, until you have found out their Constitution and Humour, and what particular Lessons you judge will take effect upon them, and if you think it fit and convenient then to try Particulars, you may, but I would not advise you to do it sooner if you regard your own safety.

You may now perceive the great Advantage General Rules have of Particular ones, and it is the Abstract of those General Rules that are of such admirable use, which I am to set down to you together with their Reasons in the following sheets, but that there may want nothing to make them compleat and easie to be retained; I have also for your greater ease and satisfaction, (at the end of my Rules and before I give my Reasons) Epitomized this Abstract, and brought it into so narrow a Compass, that a Man must have no memory at all, if he cannot so fix in his Fancy and Brain what I have there given him, as it shall not be in his power when he presenteth either Fleuret or Sword to get himself ridd of it.

And it is upon that account I call it The SWORD-MAN's Vade Mecum, *not that I would have alwise these Sheets carried about with him in his Pocket; (for that any Ignorant can do as well as he, and be ne're a whitt the wiser of them)*

but

but that the Epitome of my Rules which as I said is at the end of them, may be so engraven in his Memory, that when he is any wayes to Engage, he may through it practice all the rest which are as it were lively represented in that Mirror, which must be alwise carried about with him, and still represent those Objects (I mean Directions) upon which his Judgement must work.

Now, as my former Book of Fencing was designed for the use both of Artists and Ignorants, so this Abstract is only for Artists, there being only contained in it the very Marrow and Quintessence of Fencing, which without all debate is not only above the Practice of all, but capacity of most part of Ignorants until it be explained to them, and therefore they can have no pretence or claime of Right to it; but if such Persons will be so courious as to take a look of it, its like they may find some things (in my Observations especially) which may be a means to reclaime them, and make them sensible of their Ignorance and folly in contemning and neglecting an Art, by which a Man doth reap so many undenyable Advantages.

And if the reading of this do it not, I assure them I shall not put my self to the trouble so much as to think of doing it any other way, having lost all hopes that any thing will succed if this once fail; for to deal Ingenously, I am resolved never to put Pen more to Paper upon this Subject, seing I think what I have said first and last upon it, not only abundantly sufficient to Instruct those, whose gentile Inclinations do dispose them

them to take delight in, and follow this Useful Art; but also to convince and perswade all who have the least Drop of generous Blood, of the worth and excellency of it.

But leaving such Persons to follow their foolish Inincliations, I do really acknowledge, that it is only to such generous Spirits as you are (to whom I have Addreſs'd these following Sheets) that I so earnestly recomend the closs Practice and Observance of thir subsequent Rules, in the Rejecting or Approbation of which, I shall wholly submit my self to your Impartial Cencure; earnestly Intreating, that if there shall be found any thing in them Repugnant to the first Principles & true Fundamentals of Art, I may be acquainted with it, that so I may either Vindicate my self, or acknowledge my Fault and Error; in both which I shall most willingly endeavour to satisfie all True Lovers of Art.

And I assure you, were it not that I am Ambitious, this Art (for which I have such an Estime my self, and of which I think I have given sufficient Testimonies) should be both improven and be hereafter had in more Repute amongst the generality of our Gentry then it hath been hitherto, I had never been either at the Trouble or Charges, to expose my self a second time to the Censure of the Publick, by giving you this (I may call it my Master piece *upon this Subject) in Print.*

I thought to have had the Approbation of most of the Masters prefixed to this Piece; but there being

some

Some things in my Observations (especially anent the Abuses committed in Fencing-Schools *to which I refer you) in which we differ, and which they would not go alongst with, I have therefore only condescended to Print the Approbation of one who is of the same Opinion with my self, which I hope will not be thought any Vanity in me, seing I am most sensible the Applause and Commendation he is pleased to bestow upon me, is far above what I really deserve.*

ADIEU.

A

LETTER

OF

APPROBATION,

BY

WILLIAM MACHRIE

FENCING-MASTER,

Judge and Arbitrator of all who make any publick Trial of Skill in the Noble Art of the SWORD, *within the Kindom of* SCOTLAND.

Right Honourable,

I Received your Papers, and have perused them so narrowly, that there is not one Paragraph or Line that has escaped my strictest Observation; wherein, I find nothing but

but Plain, Undenyable, and Inerrable Truths: And (without Complement) beyond any thing that ever I have Read on that Subject; all other Authors being so Abstruse and Intricate, that those who have acquired a considerable knowledge of the Sword, cannot reach the understanding of their Writtings; so that in my Opinion, who ever may claime the Honour of being the first Author of the Noble Art of Defence, I am confident there is none who reads what you have Writ on that Subject, but will readily Esteem you one of the most considerable Advancers of it, that any Age or Country hath yet produced.

The Rules of Practice which you have so Clearly and Orderly set down in your *SCOTS Fencing Master*, shews you to be a great Master of the Art; and your reducing all these to so small a number, together with the solid Reasons and Demonstrations you have given of them in your SWORD-MAN'S *Vade mecum*, evidences you to be also in the Judgement of the Sword, a Master of all ARTISTS.

Certainly the Sword was never so much Addepted to the Pen before, as it is now by that late Piece of yours, wherein you have done this considerable Honour to the Art, that as formerly (for want of Reasons and Demonstrations of its Rules) it was scarce accounted an Art, and but a *Mechanical* one at best; Now its Fundamental Rules being digested into

good

good order, founded on firm Reasons, and fortified by solid Demonstrations, it may justly claim all the *priviledges*, that any of the *Liberal* or *Mathematical Arts* can pretend to.

Proceed then (Worthy Sir) in your Laudable Design of improving the Noble Art of the Sword, which me-thinks does only wait, and hope to receive 'its outmost Accomplishment, from the Pen & Hands of Sir WILLIAM HOPE. For your pains herein will Infallibly meet with the just Requitable of Praise, Honour and Esteem, from all true Lovers of Armes and Arts; together also with all Imaginable thanks, especially from *Sword men*; whom you cannot either Honour or Oblidge more, then by publishing that Piece; which merits more Applause and Commendation, then can ever be given it, by

RIGHT HONOURABLE,

Your Honours most Humble and Obedient Servant,

Aberdeen, *April*, 30. 1640.

William Machrie.

THE

SWORD-MANS VADE MECUM,

OR,

A Preſervative againſt the Surprize, of a Sudden Attaque with Sharps, &c.

BEING to Direct my Diſcourſe to Perſons ſo knowing and Skilful as You are to whom I have Addreſſed theſe Sheets; I think I need but ſay little (by way of Introduction) in Commendation of this ART, either to Diſplay its Excellencies, or Recommend it to You; the very Tittle of my Dedication ſuppoſing you to need neither of theſe, to excite You to its Practice.

I ſhall therefore at preſent only ſay, that the Generous and Noble Art of Defence (paſſing by all its other Qualities) may in ſome Reſpect be compared to the moſt Excellent and moſt Sublime of all Sciencies, I mean that of *Divinitie*; For as Divinity doth teach us, *to defend our Souls from the cruel aſſaults and attempts of that old Serpent the Devil, the cunning and ſubtile allure-*

ments

ments of the World, and these pleasant and short, but destroying lusts of the flesh.

So doeth the *Art of Fencing* teach us to defend our Bodies, from the Assaults and Attaques of all Adversaries, whether Artists or not, who in respect of the cruel designe they have against our Bodies, may in some sense be accounted Devils, it also teacheth us not to be deceived by the fallacious Quirks and Tricks of Artists when we are engaged with them, which do represent the cunning and subtile Allurements of the World.

And lastly, it furnisheth us with directions to defend our selves from the Thrusts and Wounds of our Adversaries, which although they can be said to be pleasant to none but the Giver, yet are short and destroying to the Receiver, short and transitory, because they are swift and given in the twinkling of an eye, or a moment; and destroying, because they seldom faile to dissipate and give a Passage to our Vital Spirits; by which we are sent a packing to our long Home: And therefore they may be justly compared (because of their danger and short continuance) to the pleasures of the World; and the Comparison cometh yet nearer, *In so far as they reach not only the Body, but oftimes also endanger the Soul.*

Seing then there is such an Analogie betwixt this Humane Art and that Divine Science

ence, what kind of Persons must those be who undervallow it?---But when I reflect a little, I find it no great surprizal that *Fencing* should meet with so many Opposers and Contemners when even Divinity yea GOD Himself (to speak with Reverence) is by some treated *En Ridicule*, and I am apt to believe that the dispising and contempt of both, (although there be no equality in the Comparison) may flow from the same Original and Source.

For as it is impossible for any Man who considers the *Fabrick* of the whole, nay; but the smallest and most inconsiderable part of the Universe, to doubt of a first or supreme Beeing, until from the consciousnes of his Sins & Provocations, it become his Interest there should be none; so is it Impossible for any Man who reflects upon, and considers the excellencies of *Fencing*, to doubt or question the usefulnes of it; until from a sence of his own Ignorance, and of the Advantadges he knows Artists will have over him; it doth become his Interest, that there should be no such thing as Art, or at least that what is called Art should be of no use: And this is certainly one of the chief Reasons, why the Art of the Sword is so much undervalued, by those who understand it not.

But that I may the better represent such Persons to you: consider in what a Pit-

ful

ful and Deplorable condition they are, when (after having received a challenge, or being obliged to Fight in Rancounter) they ſeriouſly reflect upon the Art, and Androitneſs of their Antagoniſts, and their own *Maladroitneſs*, & *Ignorance*, by which they are rendred incapable of either knowing what way to begin their Purſuite, or defend themſelves; certainly their thoughts at that time muſt either abaite and cool their Courage, or make them altogether deſperate.

And indeed, to ſee the moſt part of them when they are engaged for their Lives, one would judge them to be by their Purſuits, rather out of their Witts, and Madd-men, then Sober and Rational Perſons; and they are neceſſitate to force themſelves unto that Furie and Paſſion, that ſo their frowardneſs may ſomewhat ſupply their Ignorance; for if they declined to Fight, it would loſs them their Reputation and Honour; Therefore to ſave that they muſt Fight, and in Fighting it is odds but they loſs their Life, which to preſerve they uſe all the moſt unſeemly and deſperate Actions in the World; all which will not do againſt compleat Artiſts ſuch as you are.

And if it be asked why Ignorants (for I expect they will not take it ill I give them this Diſignation, ſeing it is not done out of any Contempt to their Perſons, or reflection upon their

their Judgements which may be very deſerving in other things, but meerly becauſe it is the cuſtom amongſt *Swordmen*, to let all who underſtand not the Art of the *Sword* go under that Name) are generally more Subject to Paſſion and Forewardneſs in their Purſute than *Artiſts*.

It is Anſwered, That in ſome Extremes there is a Coincidence, and that *Art* and *Ignorance* may ſometimes act alike, as in the inſtance of *Fear* and *Courage*, for as Deſperation which is the heigth of Fear, doth many times (being ſharpned by Neceſſity) excite Courage, and beget Hope; ſo Temerity which is the height of Courage, doth often (from experience of Danger) breed Caution, which is a diſcret Fear;

Now to make the application, *Ignorance* from a ſenſe it hath of the Hazard and Danger it may receive from Art, begets Fear or Deſpair, and being ſharpned up by this Deſpair which is as it were a leaven to make it ferment, it is forced and hoaved up (although contrary to its Nature) to Courage and Forewardneſs which I may properly enough call, *Temeritatis vel Ignorantiæ audacia*, and which ſhould be never eſteemed nor made uſe of, except in a great Extreme or Neceſſity, becauſe it hath its ariſe from *Ignorance*, which is the ground and cauſe of its being ſo frequently put

in practice by those who have little or no Art, and this I take to be the Reason of *Ignorants* having generally so hot and violent a Pursute.

So by this you may perceive how *Ignorance* may prompt a Man to be Forward and Ventorious as well as Art: now as *Ignorance* (which is *Diametrically* opposite to Art, and which should in reason produce nothing but Fear and Concern) doth excite Courage, so doth Art, which in reason should be *Prolifick* of nothing but Courage and *Heroick* Actions, breed sometimes Caution, which may be very well called a discreet and reasonable Fear, or rather *Peritiæ & experientiæ Cautela*, and which is only esteemed and put in practice by Judicious and Understanding *Artists*, because it proceeds from the experience which Art giveth them of the danger they would run in making a violent and inconsiderate Pursute, which is not carried on with Judgement, and performed by *Art*; and this is the Reason why *Artists* are generally not so *forward* and *irregular* in their Pursutes as *Ignorants*, but more *cautious* and *slow*, and consequently more *certain* and *safe*.

Is it not therefore (from what I have been saying) far more commendable, to be *dexterous* and *regular* in our *Offensive* and *Defensive motions*, then *irregular*, and as it were out of all Hope,

Hope, and in Depair, that if we overcome, we may be ſaid to have done it by *Art* and *Judgement*, and not at *randome*, and by *chance*, more beſeeming an *irrational* than a *rational* Creature.

If it be, what *Art* can teach us better, than this of *Fencing?* I confeſs I need not recommend it to you, whoſe Inclinations have already led you that way, but perhaps it may not prove an unſeaſonable Advice to others who may peruſe this & the foregoing Dedication.

I ſhall therefore ſay no more in Commendation of this Noble and *Gentlemany* Art, but ſhall before I proceed, ſhew you the Method I intend to follow in Communicating and Diſcovering the Reaſons upon which it is grounded, and the Source from whence all its Worth and Security doth flow; and for the more regular Procedure ſhall *firſt* give you the ſingle Rules, one after another, which you are alwayes to have in your Memory; Then *ſecondly* each particular Rule by it ſelf, with the Reaſons ſubjoyned to it upon which it is grounded; And *thirdly*, ſome Remarkes and Obſervations, all which will be both Uſeful, and if I miſtake it not, pleaſant to the Reader.

Firſt, The RULES.

BEfore I begin, I ſhall give you a *Fundamental*, which in reſpect of its Excellency, and

Univerſality, I may call the *Golden Number*, or *Rule of Three*, both becauſe it is alwayes to be taken alongſt with you, and to be made a part, (and that none of the leaſt) of each Particular Rule I am to give you, and alſo becauſe it conſiſts of Three important Terms or Words, which are.

Calmneſs, -- Vigour, -- and Judgement.

Now theſe three Words in general, being the only Foundation upon which all True *Fencing* is built, and each Word in particular being as it were a Column, or Pillar by which my Rules are to be ſupported, (for without them all would be but Uncertain and Falſe) I ſhall begin my Firſt Rule, which as well as all the reſt, is to be ſupported by thoſe three infallible, and never to be too exactly copied Pillars of the compoſite Order, becauſe each of them in ſome meaſure partake of the Beauty and Excellency of the other two, and to that end Earneſtly and Seriouſly intreats and deſires: That.

RULE I.

Whatever you do, let it alwayes (if poſſible) be done Calmely, and without Paſſion, and Precipitation, but ſtill with all Vigour, *and Briskneſs imaginable, your* Judgement *not failing to Direct, Order, and Govern you as to both.*

RULE

RULE *II.*

With Calmneſs, Vigour, *and* Judgement, *put your ſelf into as Cloſs, Thinn, and Convenient a Guard, as the Agility of your Body will permit, your Heels being ſtill kept as near other as poſſible.*

RULE *III.*

With Calmneſs, Vigour, *and* Judgement, *make uſe (for your Defence) of the moſt Excellent, and not to be parrallelled* Contre-caveating *Parrade, and that generally upon the outſide of your Sword, your left hand alwayes aſiſting you if any wayes doubtful of the Parrade; and that you may with the more certainty defend your ſelf, look alwayes to your Adverſary's Sword-Hand.*

RULE *IIII.*

With Calmneſs, Vigour, *and* Judgement, *endeavour to Offend your Adverſary, by binding or ſecuring his Sword, and that for the moſt part alſo upon the outſide, giving in a ſingle plain Thruſt upon the back of it, or if you pleaſe make a Feint upon the back of your Binding, your left Hand making alwayes a kind of Parrade, at the giving in of every Thruſt, the better to ſave you from a* Contre-temps; *and by no means reſt upon your Thruſt, but inſtantly after the performing of it, whether you hitt or not, recover to your Defenſive Poſture again: This is the true Play for a Mans Life: but if you be ſo far Maſter of your*

Adverſary, and ſo merciful to him that you deſign not his Life, but only to diſable him: Then.

RULE *V.*

With Calmneſs, Vigour, *and* Judgement, *Thruſt at his Sword-hand; Wreſt, or Arm, or at his neareſt advanced Thigh, the wounding any of which once, or twice, will ſeldome fail to diſable him.*

RULE *VI.*

If your Adverſary be Haſty, Paſſionate, and purſue Furiouſly, and Irregulary, then with Calmneſs, Vigour, *and* Judgement, *Croſs, Stop, and Oppoſe his Fury: but upon the contrary if Careleſs, Laſh, Slow, or perhaps Timerous, then alſo* Calmly, Vigorouſly, *and with* Judgement *purſue him.*

RULE *VII.*

With Calmneſs, Vigour, *and* Judgement, *prevent your Receiving one Thruſt for the giving another, called (after that dangerous Word, and* Artiſts Bug bear) *a* Contre-temps, *and for that end the uſing your left Hand for a* Defence *upon your Purſute, as I have before told you, will not be found amiſs.*

RULE *VIII.*

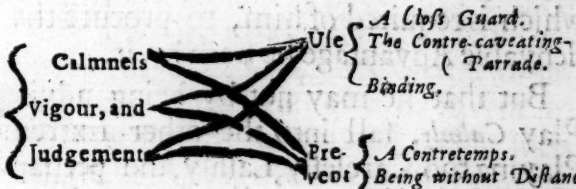
Now to put a Cloſe to my Rules, *let them all be done within diſtance as much as poſſible, and with little or no* Elonge, *or ſtretch of any part of the Body, ſave only that of the Wreſt & Arm (called a* Spring) *and as I deſired you to begin, ſo I expect you will continue*

tinue and end all your Actions, with that most Excellent Fundamental, and Golden Rule of Three, *to wit.*

Calmness,---- Vigour,--- and Judgement.

And then no doubt, you will procure by the foregoing Rules, *advantage proportionable to the Art you have acquired to put them in practice.*

But that my Reduction may yet better answer my Design, (which was to be short and compendious) and be more easily kept in your Memory, I have brought it into a narrower Compass, by, as it were Epitomizing it as followeth.



A Man must be certainly void both of Art and Memory, if upon all necessary Occasions he cannot furnish himself, with such an Excellent Preservative as this; but seing the very doubting of it, would be so absurd, and discover so much a Mans *Ignorance* and weakness, I shall say no more, but (desiring to leave it as

it were Ingraven in your Memory) proceed to the ſecond thing I propoſed, which was.

Secondly.

Each particular Rule, with the Reaſons ſubjoined to it, upon which it is Grounded.

RULE *I.*

Whatever you do, let it alwayes (if poſſible,) be done Calmely, *and without Paſſion, and Precipitation*: &c.

The Reaſons upon which this Rule is grounded, are.

Becauſe I find by Experience that Paſſion expoſeth a Man, and incapacitates him, from making uſe of his Art with that Diſcretion which is required of him, to procure the undenyable Advantage he hath by it.

But that he may not by being adviſed to Play *Calmly*, fall into the other Extreme of Playing too Careleſly, Laſhly, and perhaps Timerouſly, (it being difficult to determine which of theſe two Extremes, do moſt Eclipſe a Mans Art, and conſequently moſt expoſe him to his Adverſaries mercy) he is adviſed to counterfeit a kind of Paſſion, by playing Briskly, and Vigouteuſly, it being as it were a *Medium*, or if I may ſo call it a *Ballance* or *Counterpoiſe*, which upon the one Hand prevents his ſinking in the Gulf of Unreaſonable, and Un-

Unmanly Fear, which would loſs him his Reputation, and Honour, dearer to a Man than his very Life, and upon the other his aſcending the Ragged, Unequal, and Diſperate Rock of inconſiderate Paſſion and Forwardneſs, for which there is oftentimes hardly any Retreat, or Deſcent, but by the Life of a Mans Adverſary, if not his own with it, both which ſhould be preſerved as much as poſſible, in reſpect, not only of the great Sin it is againſt *God Almighty* (which to all *Chriſtians* ſhould be a ſufficient Reaſon) but alſo in reſpect of the ſevere puniſhments the Laws both of *God* & Man, ordain to be inflicted upon ſuch as are guilty of either: And for effectuating of which, if I be not deceived this firſt Rule will not a little contribute, if it be practiſed cautiouſly & as I have ordered in the end of it, with *Judgement*, without which the beſt Rule I can give or invent to you, will not ſignifie a Straw, it being ſuch a chief Ingredient, that without it all the Compoſitions both for *Defence* and *Offence*, in our *Fencing Pharmacopie* would ſignifie but little or nothing, as I ſhall more fully hereafter declare, when I ſpeak to the Eight Rule.

RULE II.

With Calmneſs, Vigour, *and* Judgement, *put your ſelf into as Gloſs, Thinn, and convenient a Guard*, &c.

The

The Reaſons upon which this Rule is Grounded, are.

Becauſe it is moſt certain, that the cloſer a Man ſink to the Ground, the more ſecure he is from all the Thruſts which may be given in beneath his Sword at the lower parts of his Body, which without all manner of doubt are both very dangerous, and moſt difficult to Defend, becauſe the *Parrades* of them lie not ſo Naturally to a Man's Hand (ſuppoſing him to ſtand to a *High Guard*) as the *Parrades* of the Thruſts given in above, and that either without the Sword or within it.

And the Reaſon is, becauſe in the *Defenſive* part of the ſmal Sword, all the *Parrades* that are made beneath the Hand are a great deal ſtronger and firmer, becauſe they are, and ought to be done with a *Jerk* or *Spring*, whereas all the *Parrades* of the Thruſts below the Sword, ſuch as that of *Feint a la teſte*, *Volt-coupee*, *Flancanade*, *Under counter*, &c. muſt be all (ſuppoſing him to ſtand to a *High Guard*) parried Slopwayes, & your Adverſaries Sword born off, and a little up, as it were, by yours, which both hindereth the *Spring* and weakeneth the *Parrade*, by reaſon of the compelled Poſture and Diſpoſition of your Hand, both which Inconveniences are abſolutely Guarded againſt and ſhunned, by ſinking cloſs to the Ground

Ground, and keeping the Hilt of your Sword a little higher than your Knee, and the point a little higher than your Hilt, becauſe this poſture prevents the playing of any of the above mentioned low Thruſts upon you.

In the ſecond place, I order a thinn Guard, becauſe it would be to no purpoſe to ſink cloſs, and endeavour by it to cover one part of your Body, to wit that beneath your Sword, when at the ſame time you diſcover your left Side, a part of your Body, which as much if not more deſerves to be ſecured, becauſe in it is contained, one of the moſt Noble, and (if wounded) moſt Mortal parts of a Man's Body, I mean the Heart.

Beſides reaſon will teach a Man, that he ſhould make himſelf as little a mark for his adverſary to thruſt at as poſſible, and I know no better Method to do that, than by ſinking cloſs to the Ground, and keeping back your Left ſhoulder or ſide, the one which is ſinking, making your Body ſhorter, and the other, which is keeping back your Left Side, making your Body thinner, which two anſwer the two things required by common and Naturall Reaſon, *viz. The making a Mans Body as ſhort and narrow a Mark for his Adverſary to Thruſt at, as poſſible.* I confeſs this Poſture of ſinking ſo cloſs to the Ground, is a little Uneaſie at firſt to be

acqui-

acquired by thoſe who have not been accuſtomed to it, but a little Practice in this, as in all other things, will make it become in a ſhort time as Familiar and Eaſie, as any other Poſture; therefore let not its Uneaſineſs at firſt diſcourage any perſon from atempting to learn it, for the advantage he will reap by it afterwards, will ſufficiently Recompence the Pains and Trouble he was at to make himſelf Maſter of it.

In the third Place, I order a convenient Guard, ſuch as the Agility of your Body will permit, and by that I mean, that although I have ordered ſinking to the Ground, and a Thinn Body; yet rather than that a Man ſhould (by not having that Agility of the Body and Practice requiſite to perform that Poſture) force and conſtrain himſelf into a Guard which would be uneaſie to him, by reaſon of his endeavouring to obey exactly my Rule, I am rather ſatisfied that he ſink but ſo much, and keep ſo thinn a Body as he findeth himſelf moſt firm in, and from which he is moſt able to defend himſelf, and Purſue his Adverſary, although it be not exactly according to the firſt Directions I gave him.

And the Reaſon for which I allow him this Latitude, is becauſe I find all conſtrained Poſtures, weaken both a Man's Defence and Purſute,

ſute, and I had rather have a Man Play from a Poſture wherein he can uſe his *Vigour*, although it be not altogether ſo ſecure and cloſs as I could wiſh it, than ſee him play Feeblely and Feintly from a Poſture, for which he hath not had Practice enough to make it Familiar and Eaſie, even although that Poſture) in reſpect of another Perſons Agility, may be found to be the more ſafe, and ſecure Poſture of the two, becauſe of its cloſneſs, but which cannot be ſo to him, by reaſon of the Conſtraint it putteth upon him.

But I give not this Allowance to make a Man negligent in acuſtoming himſelf to a cloſs and thinn Guard, not at all, it is only granted to him upon Neceſſity, and for a time, until he hath had ſo much Practice as to make it Familiar, and Eaſie to his Body, which the ſooner it be, ſo much the better, therefore by no means ſpare either Pains or Labour to acquire it.

The Fourth thing I order is, That your Heels be ſtill as near other as poſſible, but ſeing the Reaſon I have for this will come more properly in, when I ſpeak to the Eight Rule, I ſhall forbear the ſetting it down till then, and at preſent proceed to my Third Rule which is.

RULE

RULE *III.*

With Calmneſs, Vigour, *and* Judgement, *make uſe (for your Defence) of the moſt Excellent and not to be parallelled* Contre-caveating Parrade: *&c.*

The Reaſons upon which this Rule is Grounded, are.

Becauſe I find the *Contre-caveating* Parrade to be ſo ſafe and general a *Parrade*, that a Man who can rightly make uſe of it, needeth almoſt no other, for whereas to ſeveral of the *Leſſons* you muſt uſe proper and particular *Parrades*, ſuch as are the *Parrades* which are in a manner Peculiar to *Feint a la Teſt*, *Volt-coupee*, *Flancanade*: *Undercounter*, &c: If you make uſe of the *Contre caveating* Parrade, you ſave the Trouble of chooſing a particular *Parrade*, and alſo, the running the hazard of being ſurpriſed by a Quick-handed Adverſary, (who before you can well think upon what *Parrade* is moſt proper to Defend the *Leſſon* you imagine he is going to Play, would have the Thruſt home at you) but making uſe of this *Parrade* exactly, you will certainly have your deſign of Defending your ſelf.

Beſides in making uſe of other *Parrades* a *man* may be deceived, by reaſon of his judging that the thruſt will be given within the Sword when

when it is really designed to be given without, or without the *Sword* when it is really to be given within, so that although a Man have a quick enough *Parrade*, and a good Eye; yet you see he may be deceived with other *Parrades* because of his wrong judging of the coming in of the Thrust, but making use of this *Parrade* as he should, he will never be deceived, for this *Parrade* Crosseth and Confoundeth the whole Art of the *Sword*, as *Binding*, *Slipping*, *Plain thrusts*, *single and double Feints of all kinds*, *Quarting*, *Volting*, &c. which cannot be said of any other particular *Parrade* of the *Sword*, but of this most Excellent *Contre caveating Parrade*.

And the Reason is, because it is a Circular *Parrade* including a whole Circle, whereas the other *Parrades* make but a Part of a Circle, and in so much as they come short of the whole Circle, in so far are they Defective and Uncertain, because the Thrust may come in at that part of the Circle, which the Parrade (whatever one it be) left Uncloſed or Unfinished, and therefore the second *Parrades* in *Quart* and *Terce* with a Slooping Point, are more secure and certain, although not so quick and firm, as the first *Parrades* in *Quart* and *Terce* with the Point a little higher than the *Hilt*, & that because these make more of a Circle than thir do, but this *Contre-caveating Parrade* is

is a great deal more Secure then either of them, for it maketh not only one whole Circle, but sometimes two or three, which is the reason of its so infallibly feeling and Engaging the Adversaries *S*word, and consequently of its being so Infallible a *Parrade*.

In the Second place, I order it to be used generaly upon the outside, and my Reason for that is, because first it disordereth a Mans Adversaries *Sword-hand* much more to *Parrie*, *Bind* or *Secure* him upon the Outside of his Sword, all which this *Parrade* doth, then to *Parrie*, *Bind* or *Secure*, him upon the inside, and that because when you *Parrie* or *Bind* within, the Natural Posture of his hand Facilitats both his redoubling of a thrust upon you, if he design it, and his slipping you when you are going to *Bind* him, which is just contrary when you Offer to *Parrie* or *Bind* him without, for then the disposition of his hand is so forced out of the easie, and natural Situation of it, that it renders him, if not uncapable, yet at least a great deal slower both in his redoubling, & slipping. And this is the Advantage you will reap by *Parrieing* with the *Contre caveating Parrade* upon the out *S*ide of your Adversaries *S*word.

There is yet another considerable Advantage which a Man may have by using this *Parrade*, and it is this, if it should be a Mans fortune to be Engaged in the dark, all the *Parrades* in the World

World will never so find out, Engage, and Secure his Adversary's sword as this will, for if a Mans Sword came in the Dark, but within the Reach of yours, it will be impossible for you but you must feel it, because of the Reasons above mentioned, which will be a means to Secure you from the uncertain *Attaque* of your Adversary, and also make you more certain of what you are to do your Selt, even although it be in the Dark, which is an Advantage that no other *Parrade* will yeild you but it, and therefore in my humble opinion not to be neglected or undervalued.

The Third thing that I ordered, was that your left Hand should alwayes assist you, if you were any wayes doubtfull of the *Parrade*, and indeed this is so necessary a thing, especialy in the *Offensive* part, that what I intend mostly to say of it, I shall refer to my discourse upon the next *Rule*, (being on *Offensive* one) and at present shall only say, when the *Contre caveating Parrade* requireth the use of the left Hand to supply its wants, with what Confidence can the other *Parrades* claim the Name they have, seing they are so deficient (in respect of it) to give a Man that Satisfaction and Security, which but justly he should expect, for the Labour and Pains he hath been at, to Understand, Learn, and put them in Practice.

But not to be tedious the laſt thing *I* order-ed was, that to Defend your ſelf with the more certainty, you ſhould look always to your Adverſaries Sword-hand, and the Reaſon of this is, becauſe if you ſhould endeavour to draw any obſervation from his eyes, he may deceive you by looking in your Face, when he intends to thruſt at your Belly, or looking at your Belly when he intends to thruſt you in the Face, or if it ſhould ſo fall out that your Adverſary Squint, it is in that caſe impoſſible for you by looking to ſuch a Perſons Eyes, to Conjecture where, and at what Part of your Body, he intends to thruſt.

Neither will a Man though his Adverſary have a ſtraight look perceive it well, or be altogether certain upon what part of his Body the thruſt is comming in, by even looking to the *S*words blade, firſt by Reaſon of its clearneſs, which in a manner dazelleth a Mans Eyes with the motion it maketh; Secondly by Reaſon of the ſwiftneſs of its motion, which is a great deal ſwifter then that of his hand, for his hand being the *Center*, and the *Swords point* the *circumference*, and the *Sword* as it were a Line *Drawn* from that *Circumference* to the hand or *center*, to which it is in a manner fixed, it will by a *Mathematicall demonſtration* follow, that all the Parts of the *Sword* from the Hand to the Point make

make proportionably a *Swifter motion* then the Hand doth, as they are distant from it, and do *nearer approach* to the Point or *Circumference*: A *true Simile* of which is a *Wheel*, the *Neave* or *Center* of which Representeth the *Hand*, the *Spoaks* the *Sword*, and the *Rimm*, or *outmost Circumference* the *Swords* Point; Now set the *Wheel* in Motion by turning it about, and you shall perceive pretty distinctly the *Spoaks* in their Motion at the *Center* as they are turning, but you shall not at all perceive them in their Motion at the *Rimm* or *outmost Circumference*, by reason of the *Swiftness* of their Motion; it is just so with the Motion of a *Sword* at the *Hilt* and *Point*.

So that, to look to the middle of a *Swords Blade*, or within a Foot of its *Hilt*, is not so certain as to look to its *Hilt*, because the Motion of the *Sword*, at that Foots distance from the *Hilt*, or at the middle of it, is a great deal quicker, than the Motion at the *Hilt*, which as it was said before, is as it were the *Center*, and therefore the slowest Mover, and consequently the safest to look to; but to look to the *Swords* Point, which is the *outmost Circumference*, is yet worst of all, for it being double the Distance from the *Center*, or *Hilt*, that the middle of the *Sword* is, and every part of the *Sword* moving in proportion Swiftlier, as they

are farther distant from the *Center*, it will by Demonstration follow, that the Motion of the *Sword* at the Point, exceeds the Motion of it at the *Middle*, as much as the Motion at the *Middle*, exceeds the Motion at the *Center*, or *Hilt*.

Therefore, to look to the *Point*, or *Circumference* of the *Sword*, that so a Man may be certain of its Motion, is Ridiculous, and Uncertain, by reason of its being the Swiftest *Mover*; and to look to the *Middle* part of the *Sword*, although I confess it to be more certain than to look to the *Point*, yet it is also not at all to be Trusted to, by reason that its Motion is too quick, but to look (according to my Direction) to the *Sword-hand*, or *Center*, is a thing most certain, and only to be Trusted to, (and that because of its slow Motion) for the better perceiving the Motion of the *Sword*, and finding out where a Man intends to Thrust, as I think I have fully Demonstrate, and without the Observation of which, a Man can never with Confidence, and Assurance say, that he either is, or can be, Master of the *Parrade*.

RULE *IV.*

With Calmness, Vigour, *and* Judgement, *endeavour to Offend your Adversary, by* Binding, *or* Securing *his* Sword, *and that for the most part*, &c.

The

The Reaſons upon which this Rule is Grounded, are.

Becauſe it is found that *Binding*, or *Securing* ones Adverſaries *Sword*, before a Man offer to give home any Thruſt,(his left Hand making alwayes a kind of *Parrade* at the giving in of every Thruſt) is the only Safe and Secure Play, with either *Blunts* or *Sharpes*; to ſecure a Man from *Contre-temps*, and Thruſts from the *Reſpoſts*, which I ſhall endeavour to prove.

Suppoſe you intend but to Play a plain Thruſt upon your Adverſary, then unleſs you firſt Secure his *Sword*, by beating it out of the way, you muſt certainly Thruſt ſtraight home, without ſo much as regarding his *Swords* being juſt oppoſite to, and preſented againſt you, and in that Caſe, what ſhould hinder him to Thruſt juſt as you are Thruſting, and to *Contre-temps* with you?

You will perhaps ſay, your Thruſting cloſs by the Feeble of his *Sword*, will bear off his Thruſt, or the *quarting* of your Head and Shoulders well will ſave it; but do not deceive your ſelf with this fancie; for in the firſt place I can aſſure you, that although when you play upon a Maſters Breaſt, he may ſuffer you to Thruſt alwayes cloſs to his *Sword*, yet in Practice it will not be in your power once in ſix Thruſts, to have the opportunity of thruſt-

ing cloſs to your Adverſaries *Sword*, and ſo that will not hold. But ſecondly, ſuppoſe you ſhould Thruſt cloſs to your Adverſaries *Sword*, and *quart* your Head and Shoulders well, what doeth hinder your Adverſary, to ſink the *Point* of his *Sword*, as you are Thruſting, and wound you at the ſame time in the Belly? for it is certain your *Sword* cannot defend two parts at once, and if you *quart* your Head and Shoulders well, and Thruſt cloſs to your Adverſaries *Sword* above, then you are diſcovered below, which giveth him the Occaſion, and Opportunity, if he can take it, to *Contre-temps* you, ſo this is as Uncertain and Unſecure as the other, and thus in moſt part of the other *Leſſons*, as well as in a plain Thruſt, doth a Man expoſe himſelf.

I can only except *Flancanade* and *Batterie*, but yet they are not ſo ſecure as *Binding*; for *Binding* putteth your Adverſaries *Sword* quite out of the way, ſo that if you do it Strongly and Neatly, you may have your Thruſt home, and your Body in its *Defenſive* poſture again, before his *Sword* come into the ſtraight Line betwixt your Body and his, or be in ſuch a Diſpoſition as he can wound you with it, but no other *Leſſon* doth this ſo well as *Binding*, and therefore none of them is ſo Good or Safe.

Its true the moſt part of the other *Leſſons* do by

by Cunning and Subtility, as it were Insensibly *Cheat* and *Dukoy* your Adversaries *Sword* out of the straight Line, as all kind of *Feints*, &c. And indeed I must confess he betrayes his *Ignorance* but too much, who suffers himself to be so *Duckoyed* and *Cheated*, both out of his Art, and I may say sometimes his Life, with such kind of Tricks; but *Binding* doth with so much *Vigour* and *Firmness* beat your Adversaries *Sword*, and force it out of the way, that unless he be a great *Artist*, it is impossible for him to Resist, or Oppose it: and therefore it is the only secure play to be made use of for a Man's Life, and the only means to secure a Man, as said is.

First, from a *Contre-temps*, because of his Adversaries *Sword* being forced out of the way by it, which incapacitates him to Thrust, until a Man hath given his thrust, and recovered himself to his *Defensive Posture* again; but to make sure Work, and to prevent more certainly a *Contre-temps*, especially if your Adversary should be a good *Sword-man*, you see I order your left Hand to make a kind of *Parrade* or *Defence*, at the giving in of every Thrust, so that if this be done Neatly, and with Discretion, you are a great deal more secure from a *Contre-temps*, than if you did omit it; And indeed I know no other way a Man can be certain of his Defence but this, and what I said in my

Reaſons to the preceeding Rule of the *Contre-caveating Parrade*, I may ſay here of *Binding*, that if it ſtand in need of the uſe of the left Hand, to ſecure it from a *Contre-temps*, what Security can a Man expect, from playing any of the other *Leſſons*.

But this *Binding* with the uſe of the left Hand, doth not only ſave you as I ſaid from *Contre-temps*; But ſecondly, preſerves you alſo from thruſts from the *Reſpoſt*, & to make it with the uſe of the left Hand joyned to it, yet more effectual againſt *Contre-temps*, and Thruſts from the *Reſpoſt*; I have joyned a great and conſiderable helper to it, by adviſing you not to reſt at all upon your Thruſt, but to recover your Body inſtantly to your *Defenſive Poſture*, after the giving in of every Thruſt, although your Thruſts ſhould not be deſigned home, but even half Thruſt; the cuſtom of reſting upon ones Thruſt is ſo Dangerous, and hath ſuch bad Conſequences, that I am perſwaded, he can never be a good *Sword man*, nor play ſecurely who is guilty of it, which I think is a ſufficient enough Reaſon, to make any Man of Judgement guard againſt it.

Now thir three, *viz. Binding*, *The Uſe of the left Hand*, and *the quick recovering of the Body after every Thruſt*, are ſo Linked together, that they may become a certain Defence againſt *Contre-temps*, and Thruſts from the *Reſpoſt*, that any

one

one of them without the other two, would not infallibly prove effectual, but the three being wrought and joyned together, do make so strong a *Barricade*, and such a secure and infallible Defence, that no *Contre-temps* in the World, nor any Thrusts from the *Respostes*, can make a breach upon it, or render it Ineffectual.

And to make this the more clear, consider that although by *Binding* you may force your Adversaries *Sword* out of the way; yet if he be an *Artist*, and have a quick Hand, he may before your Thrust be home, bring his *Sword* into the right Line again, and give you a Thrust as soon almost as you can give yours, although you was the first Mover: now the only way to prevent this, is to strengthen this defence of *Binding*, & making it more secure by joyning the second thing ordered to it, which was the help of the left Hand, notwithstanding of which your Defence is yet uncertain, & imperfect, for although by using your left Hand, you may turn off the Thrust he was giving home at you, yet if you rest upon your thrust, he may alter and change the giving in of his thrust, and so cheat and deceive your left hand. Therefore to let your defence have all the certainty imaginable you must yet farther strengthen it, and make it as it were impregnable, by joyning to the use of the left Hand, a quick Recovery of the Body, which Three

make

make the Defence upon your Purſuite moſt Certain and Infallible, if the Fault be not your own, or that you have not acquired *Art* enough to put them exactly in Practice.

And as for my Advice to *Bind* generally upon the outſide of the *Sword*, what I ſaid in my Reaſons to the preceeding Rule, concerning the making uſe of the *Contre-caveating Parrade* generally upon the Outſide, may be alſo ſaid here of *Binding* generally upon the Outſide, and therefore I refer you to what I ſaid there, not doubting but that I have fully convinced you, that (according to my Rule) there is no True and Secure Play with *Sharps*, and for a Mans Life, but by *Binding*, or *Leſſons* proceeding from it, the uſe of the left Hand, and a quick Recovery of the Body, perfecting with the *Binding* your Deſence upon all your Purſuites: But if you deſign not your Adverſaries Life, but only to diſable him, Then.

RULE *V.*

With Calmneſs, Vigour, *and* Judgement, *Thruſt at his* Sword-hand, Wreſt, *or* Arm, *or at his neareſt advanced* Thigh, *&c.*

The Reaſons upon which this Rule is Grounded, are.

Becauſe I find the more home a Man playeth his Thruſts, the more he expoſeth himſelf and

and is lyable to Thrusts from the *Respost*, and albeit a Man in playing for Life and Death, is necessitat sometimes to play home part of his Thrusts fully to the Body; yet when he doth not design the Life of his Adversary, there is not that necessity for giving them so fully home, and so he needeth not so expose himself.

Now if he intends not to expose himself, and yet designs to disable his Adversary, What better Method can there be, then for him to Thrust at those parts of his Adversaries Body which lie neareſt to him, and which he can reach without almost any kind of Hazard, or stretch of his Body, such as are the *Arm*, *Wrest*, *Sword-hand*, and *Thighs*, and which if hit, do as soon disable a Man, as any wounded Member of the Body, by reason of the many Veins, *Arteries*, *Muscles*, *Sinews*, which are contained in them.

This is also an excellent Rule to be observed by Little, and Short Men, against those who are Tall and Vigorous, and whose great Design is alwayes to *Contre-temps*, when a Man playeth fully home any Thrust to their Body, by reason of the Advantage they have of their long Reach or *Elonge*. It is also excellent to play much from the *Respost* upon such kind of Persons; But I think I need say no more for

prov-

proving of this, the Rule it self being so clear that it needeth no Commentary.

RULE VI.

If your Adversary be Hasty, Passionate, and Pursue Furiously, and Irregularly, then with Calmness, Vigour, *and* Judgement, *&c.*

The Reasons upon which this Rule is Grounded, are.

Because it is found by Experience, that nothing encourages a Man more (who is of a Foreward Humour) to continue his violent Pursute, than the yeilding altogether to him, and not offering any wayes to resist him; so that by Crossing, Stopping, and Opposing his Fury, I mean that a Man should alwayes so soon as ever he hath presented his *Sword*, counterfeit a Real, or make a true half Pursute, which are alone, and which half Pursute will be found extremely necessary in putting a stop to the Violence, and Fury of his Adversary.

For if you observe it, you will find for the most part, that all Foreward Humors if given Liberty to, do Extravague extremely, and become most Insolent, Impertinent, and Unsupportable, but if they be in the least checked, it stopeth their Carrier, and maketh them truely discover their Natural Constitution, which

which is just upon the other Extreme of suffering all Reproaches, and being Hectored and Baffled at all Hands.

But as in most part of things there is some Exceptions, so is there in this also, because there may be some Men of a great deal of Natural Courage, who being sensible of their own *weakness* and *ignorance* in the *Art of the Sword*, do find it absolutely necessary (when it is their misfortune to be engaged) to supply that want by brisking it out, and confounding their Adversary if possible by their forwardness, although he be a very good *Swordman*, (but if he be such, neither their Briskness nor Forwardness will do the business,) and as I said, their Natural Force and Courage, furnish them wherewithall to push it to the very outmost, but there are few People of this stamp to be found, and where an Artist meets with one of those, he will meet with twenty who are such as I before described.

But engage with whom you please, either with *Ignorants* of the *first* and *second constitution* and *humour*, or with *Artists* of either, a constant and vigorous *half pursute*, (for you can turn it into a true one when you please) is the only method to make your Art effectual, and their *irregular passion* and *ignorant courage*, to turn into smoak, and evanish in nothing.

I need but say little of the second part of the Rule, which is, if your Adversary should be Careless, Lash, *Slow*, or perhaps Timerous, that then with *Calmness*, *Vigour*, and *Judgement*, you should pursue him, because if he be Careless, he can be no great *Artist*, at least if he be, his Carelessness incapacitats him from putting his *Art* in practice, and consequently reaping any benefit by it, and if he be *Lash*, or *Timerous*, then although he have *Art*, yet it betokeneth *Cowardiceness*, which also rendereth his *Art* useless to him, and in both those Cases you will have little to do, but to Divert your self, and by using your *Art* with *Judgement*, Convince and Demonstrate to him (by letting him feel some of your gentlest Thrusts) how far you are Master of him, and how much he is in your Mercy.

RULE *VII.*

With Calmness, Vigour, *and* Judgement, *prevent your receiving one Thrust for the giving another, called (after that dangerous Name, and Artists* Bugbear) *a* Contre-temps, *&c.*

The Reasons upon which this Rule is Grounded, are.

Because certainly all the *Art* in the World signifies not a *Farthing*, if a Man cannot by it infallibly Defend himself from a *Contre-temps*, for what doth it avail or profit a Man, to pursue his

his Adversary with all the *Offensive Art* imaginable, and wound him, if at the same time he is wounded himself, and that he doth not Back, or second that his *Offensive Art*, or pursute, with his *Defensive Art*, that so he may shun a *Contre-temps*.

Can it be any satisfaction to him, that out of Eagerness to give his Adversary a wound, he hath suffered himself by his Carelesness, to receive one perhaps much more Dangerous? Certainly to any *Artist* or Man of *Judgement* it can be none, but rather a matter of Regrate and Sorrow, that he should have been at so much Pains and Trouble to acquire *Art*, and then to make so bad use of it, as the ill Consequences of exchanged Thrusts do too often prove; therefore to prevent such Mischiefs, observe this Rule, and what I have said in my Reasons for the Fourth, where you will find full Satisfaction, and infallible Directions both to prevent *Contre-temps*, and Thrusts from the *Redoost*.

But me thinks I hear some Foreward *Ignorant* saying, that this Advice may be very good for *Artists* to observe, who have been Taught both how to Offend their Adversary, and also to Defend themselves, upon their Pursute from a *Contre-temps*, if their Adversary design one, but for such *Ignorants* as they are, who

who would neither be at the Expences to imploy Masters to Instruct them in this *Art*, nor, if they did imploy them, could take the pains to follow it out, understand it, and put it in practice, it signifieth nothing, and all the time that is spent in either Writting, or Advising it by word of Mouth, is but so much lost time and Labour in vain.

In Answer to which, I shall in the first place grant, that as to what relates to them, it signifieth indeed nothing, in respect that they are Ignorant, and have not *Art* to make my Directions effectual, for my Advices are an Abstract of the best Rules in *Fencing*, which are to be most exactly observed, by the greatest of *Sword-men*, so that to all who are either *Ignorant*, or who have only the bare *Theory*, without Practice proportionable to it, this forego-ing Advices and Rules were never designed, as I before told in my Dedication.

Secondly, had I been to advise *Ignorants*, I would have desired them to do the quite contrary, which is to be most Foreward, and to pursue most Furiously, and Irregularly, and so endeavour to wound their Adversary, let it cost themselves what it would; and the Reason is clear, because it is most evident, that all the Advantage an *Ignorant* can expect to have of an *Artist*, must flow from his Furious and

and Violent Purſute, and endeavouring to force his Adverſary to *Contre-temps* with him every Thruſt, (but this will have but a ſmall Effect againſt a True *Artiſt*) for if he ſhould offer not to Purſue, but endeavour Naturally to Defend himſelf, a *Sword-man* is in that Caſe as much Maſter of him in his Play, as (to make a Compariſon) a Profeſſor of *Divinity* is Maſter of a young Student in his *Theologie*, or an Expert *Mathematician* Maſter of one who is but in his Inſtitutions of *Geometry*.

Therefore the only Method an *Ignorant* ſhould take to Baffle an *Artiſt*, is to be Forewaard and Irregular in his Motions, to ſee if by his Temerity and Rambling, he can Confound and Force the *Artiſt*, becauſe he is ſo Hot and Smartly put to it, to be ſatisfied to give a *Contre-temps*, that ſo he may make himſelf as much as is in his power, in an equal condition with the *Ignorant*, who is almoſt certain to receive a Thruſt, as well as the *Artiſt*, and perhaps more Dangerous, becauſe of the *Artiſt*'s knowing better to Plant and Adjuſt his Thruſts than he can do; for although an *Ignorant*'s Forewardneſs and Fury, may help him to force the giving of a *Contre-temps* by an *Artiſt*; yet it can nowayes teach him to Adjuſt his Thruſt, or acquire any Advantage that way, which undeniably, and without any manner of Debate, all *Artiſt* have of *Ignorants*,

by their knowing better how to *Adjuſt* and *Plant* their Thruſts, and will ſtill have ſo long as the other do really deſerve the Name of *Ignorants*.

But for all I have ſaid, I ſtill think to hear him inſiſt and maintain, that even to *Artiſts* this Advice of ſhuning *Contre-temps* will but ſignifie little, becauſe whoever will be but at the Trouble to viſit the *Fencing-ſchools*, ſhall ſcarcely ſee one Aſſault of ten, made either by *Artiſts* againſt *Artiſts*, or *Artiſts* againſt *Ignorants*, but what is ſo Compoſed and made up of *Contre temps*, that one would think the greateſt Art they learn, and aime at, is to ſtrive who ſhall *Contre-temps* oftneſt, ſo that a Man is neceſſitat to think one of two, either that the *Art* is of it ſelf unſufficient, to give that ſecurity againſt *Contre-temps* a Man would deſire, or that the Maſters play the Cheat, and teach not ſo much of the ſecurity of the *Art* as they know, ſo that if the Fault be in the Maſters, they ought not to be Encouraged, or Imployed; and if it be in the *Art*, then it is not worth the Learnning, becauſe an *Ignorant* can *Contre-temps* an *Artiſt*, as well as the *Artiſt*, when it only pleaſeth him, can *Contre-temps*, or Exchange Thruſts with the *Ignorant*, which maketh the *Ignorant's* Forewardneſs as Advantagious, Profitable, and Uſeful to him, as all the *Fallacious* Tricks and Directions, which an *Artiſt* hath

been

been at the Pains and Expences to Understand and Learn from his Master, can be to him, and therefore that this Advice of mine to shun *Contre-temps*, is but a bare Speculation, and a thing Impracticable, and consequently of as little use to an *Artist*, as to an *Ignorant*.

One who is not an *Artist*, but such an one as the Objecter (I mean an *Ignorant*) will be apt to think that what is here objected is almost unanswerable, while in effect it is just nothing; And to give you some Satisfaction I shall take the pains to Answer it, which I hope to all understanding Men will prove a Motive to make them respect *Fencing*, and then endeavour, first to Understand and Practise, and when once that length, then to rely upon the Certainty and Infallibility of the preceeding Rules, which upon the contrary, if not exactly put in Practice according to my Directions, will prove both very Fallible and Uncertain, for what I speak must be by them acted, other wayes all will prove false, and therefore if their expectation be not Answered, the Fault is their own, and none of mine.

But as to the Answer of the Objection, I say that it is neither the defect of the *Art*, which occasioneth so many *Contre-temps* in the *Fencing-schools*, because I dare be bold to say, that whoever practiseth exactly the foregoing Di-

rections, ſhall infalliby prevent and ſhun all *Contre-temps*, ſo that if thir Rules be ſufficient, and are a part of *Fencing*, then the *Art* is ſufficient to ſecure a Man from *Contre-temps*, and therefore it is not any deficiency in the Art, which is the cauſe of ſo many *Contre-temps* in the *Fencing ſchools*.

Neither is it the Maſters Ignorance, who know not to Teach this ſecure Play, becauſe to my certain knowledge, the moſt part of them, and thoſe who are beſt imployed, build their Art upon the ſame very Foundations & Rules which I have given you (although I confeſs they are Guilty of ſome Abuſes and Omiſſions in their Schools, which I would willingly have Rectified, for which ſee my ſecond Obſervation) ſo that it cannot be their *Ignorance* in not knowing to Teach this ſecure kind of Play, which is the cauſe of ſo many *Contre-temps*.

Nor is it likewiſe the Maſters playing the Cheat, in not Teaching; or keeping ſecret, and not Revealing and Diſcovering to their Scholars, when they give them their Leſſons, the Hazard and Danger of *Contre-temps*, which are exchanged in Schools; No, the Fault lieth not in any of theſe, but in the Scholar, who although his Maſter ſhew him the way how to prevent *Contre-temps*, and the Danger that is

in

in them; yet will not be at the pains to observe his Directions, but will follow his own Method, because he thinketh himself, if he hath been but three Months at the *School*, as Dexterous and Understanding as his Master, and that he standeth in need no more of his Advice, but may be his own Governour and Director.

This is the true Reason why we see so many *Contre-temps* in Schools, and consequently have so many bad *Sword-men* in the Kingdom, but to a true *Artist* who hath exactly followed his Masters Advice, and hath acquired sufficient Practice; I maintain that the foregoing Advice, will be most Seasonable, Acceptable, & Useful, let *Ignorants* talk what they will.

And as for their being certain to *Contre-temps* with an *Artist*, when they please to put themselves in that Hazard, I positively deny it, for upon the contrary I mantain that a true *Artist* may, (provided he practise exactly the foregoing Rules) infallibly save and keep himself from being *Contre-temped*, let the *Ignorant* Force and Push as he pleaseth, and if the *Artist* do it not, it is not the Fault, or any Defect or Unsufficiency in the Art it self, but only his weakness, and failing to make use of the Security that his Art is able to furnish him with; and as upon the one Hand an *Artist* can infallibly

ſave himſelf from a *Contretemps* by an *Ignorant*, I deny not but one *Artiſt* may *Contre-temps* another, (becauſe it is for them chiefly that this Direction or Rule for ſhunning of *Contretemps* was deſigned) ſo upon the other, he can infallibly *Contre-temps* with the *Ignorant* as often as he pleaſeth, and it ſhall not be in the *Ignorants* power to hinder or prevent him.

For you muſt underſtand that to give a true and real *Contre-temps*, doth really require *Judgement* and a ſwift and juſt Hand, as I ſhall immediately ſhew you, and here I deſire you to make a Diſtinction, betwixt an *Ignorants* *Contre-temping* an *Artiſt*, and his Forcing the *Artiſt* by the Violence and Fury of his Purſute, for his own Eaſe and Satisfaction to *Contre-temps* him, for this *Laſt* I do not deny, but voluntarly acknowledges, that an *Artiſt* may be ſo preſſed, that when he findeth he can do no better, he is ſatisfied, (rather than to let the *Ignorant* have any Advantage of him) to put himſelf in the ſame Hazard with him, by offering to *Contre-temps* him, and when People ſometimes ſee an *Artiſt* Reduced to this ſtrait, they are ſo far miſtaken, as to think that the *Ignorant contre-temps* him, whereas it is really the *Artiſt* that *contre-tempeth* the *Ignorant*, that he may be ſaid to have loſt no Advantage by his Art, nor the *Ignorant* to have gotten any by his *Ignorance* and Furious *Forewardneſs*.

But

But as upon the one Hand, I acknowledge that an *Artiſt* may be ſo preſſed with an *Ignorant*, that he is neceſſitate to Venture and Hazard a *Contre-temps* with him, ſo upon the other, I poſitively deny, that it is in the power of any *Ignorant* to *Contre temps* a Perſon who is really an *Artiſt*, and my Reaſon is, becauſe as I ſaid before, to give a real *Contre temps*, doth really require *Judgement* and *a ſwift and juſt Hand*; and that no *Ignorant* can be ſuppoſed to have, and that it requireth thoſe Three to make it evident thus.

If an *Ignroant* give a real *Contre-temps*, it muſt be given juſt as the *Artiſt* is Thruſting at him, and neither before nor after, for if it be either before or after, then it is no *Contre temps*; now ſuppoſe it be before the *Artiſt* Thruſt, then the *Artiſt* will not give one Thruſt for another, and therefore it is no *Contre-temps*, but the Fault of the *Artiſt*, who did not Defend the Purſute of the *Ignorant*, and ſo it is a fair Thruſt, and cannot be called a *Contre-temps*; and if it be after the *Artiſt* hath Thruſt, that the *Ignorant* giveth him a Thruſt; then neither can it be called a *Contre temps*, but rather a Thruſt from the *Reſpoſt*; and ſo it was the *Artiſts* Fault in not Defending himſelf better upon his own Purſute, and not the *Ignorants* Judgement that made him give it.

Now as it cannot be called a *Contre-temps*, which is either given before, or after an *Artist* doth Thrust, so that only can be called a *Contre-temps*, which is given at the same very nick of time the *Artist* is Trusting, for then both will undoubtedly receive a Thrust at the same time; (unless one of them prevent it by the help of the left Hand) and this is that which can only be called a real *Contre-temps*, and that an *Ignorant* can give this, I deny for three Reasons; The first is, that he must have the Judgement to Time his Thrust, just as the *Artist* is Thrusting; and the second, and third, that he must both have a quick Hand to be as soon home as the *Artist*; and a just Hand to Plant his Thrust right, none of which an *Ignorant* can be said to have; for not having the *Art* of the *Sword*, he cannot have the Judgement of it, and without Practice (which none will say he can pretend to) he can neither have a Just, nor Swift Hand: And therefore that it is not in the power of an *Ignorant*, to give an *Artist* a real *Contre-temps* will hold good, as I think I have sufficiently made appear. And also that to give a real *Contre-temps*, is required *Judgement*, and *a Swift and Just Hand.*

And upon the contrary, that an *Artist* can infallibly *Contre-temps* with an *Ignorant*, as often as he pleaseth, and it shall not be in the *Ignorants*

rants power to prevent it, is very clear, for the lack of *Judgement*, *a quick Haud*, and *the practice to Adjuſt a Thruſt*, being the Three things which render an *Ignorant* incapable to *Contre-temps* an *Artiſt*, it will follow, that an *Artiſt* having theſe three Advantages, they give to him that, which the want of them diveſt the *Ignorant* of; ſo that the *Ignorant* being rendered uncapable to *Contre-temps* by the want of them, by the Rule of Contraries, the *Artiſt* by having them, is made capable to *Contre-temps* the *Ignorant*, when and how often he pleaſeth.

So by this time, I doubt not but you are ſenſible of the weakneſs of the Objection, and how unreaſonable and frivolous it is, and alſo underſtand what Advantages a Man's Art giveth him upon the one Hand, and what Inconveniencies and Hazards his *Ignorance* upon the other doth expoſe him to; and if ſo, then I need not inquire which of the two you had rather be, whether a *Judicious Artiſt*, or a *Furious* and *Foreward Ignorant*; ſeing your very Favouring the one, would accuſe you of Folly; and your Deſpiſing the other, diſcover your Sloth and Careleſneſs.

RULE *VIII.*

Now to put a cloſe to my Rules, let them be all done within Diſtance as much as poſſible, &c.

The

The Reaſons upon which this Rule is Grounded, are.

Becauſe the cloſer a Man play to his Adverſary (if he be Maſter of the *Defenſive part*) he playeth ſo much the ſecurer for himſelf, and is in a better Capacity to Hurt or Offend his Adverſary, then when he is without Diſtance, and is neceſſitate before the giving in of every Thruſt to approach, for this both diſordereth his own Body, by expoſing it more to the *Contre-temps* of his Adverſary, and alſo maketh his Purſute not ſo effectual, in reſpect that it is not ſo quick and ſmart, as when it is done within Diſtance; For playing within Diſtance, all your Thruſts may be given in the twinckling of an Eye, and a great deal more certain as to the *Planting*, being only done with the *Spring* of your *Arm*, and without almoſt any *Elonge* of the Body, which are the ſecond and third things adviſed in this laſt Rule.

Now it is moſt certain, that all Thruſts given only with a *Spring* or *Jerk* of the *Arm*, are a great deal more Strong, Quick, and Firme, then when they are performed with an *Elonge*, becauſe the Elonging or Stretching the reſt of your Body, weakneth and taketh away both the Force of the *Spring*, and Quickneſs of the *Thruſt*: Therefore to Play only with a *Spring* of the *Arm*, and with as little a

Stretch

Stretch or *Elonge* as possible, is the only best way to play both smartly, and securely: besides if a Man accustome himself to great Stretches, he runneth into two Inconveniencies, the one is the exposing his Body by it to the *Contre-temps*, and Thrusts from the *Respost* of his Adversary, which if he did not stretch, would not be so much exposed; The other is the Danger he putteth himself in, if his Feet should slip, and he fall, which is also prevented if he play within Distance, only with a *Spring of the Arm*, and with little or no *Stretch*: And therefore if it were but only upon this one Account, I think a Man should shun *Stretching* as much as possible. A Man hath likewise this Advantage by playing clos to his Adversary, that it preventeth the Variety of Lessons which would make him the more uncertain of the *Parrade*.

But that you may the better do it, I gave you an Advice in my second Rule, which will be of great use to prevent your *Stretching*, and it was, *That you should still keep your Heels as near other as possible*, which I omitted to speak to in that place, thinking it to come more a *Propos* here; now if you but consider it, you will find that this keeping of your Heels near other, when you are even without Distance, but more especially when you are within, doth make your Thrust come

the

the farther home, and reach your Adverſary with a far leſs *Stretch* of the Body, then if your Heels were keep a good way aſunder, ſo that playing within Diſtance, as I order you, if your Heels be cloſs, the ſtepping foreward a Foot, with your advanced Foot, will bring your Thruſt as far home, as your full *Stretch* would have done, if your hindmoſt Heel had been far diſtant from your advanced; ſo that keeping your hindermoſt Heel, cloſs almoſt to your advanced Heel and being within Diſtance, you will almoſt without any *Stretch* of the Body, only by ſtepping foreward a little with your advanced Foot, and uſing the *Spring* of your Arm, ſheath your *Sword* to the very middle in your Adverſarie's Body, if he do not oppoſe you.

But this is not all the Advantage you reap by keeping your Heels near; for it not only carrieth home your Thruſt farther; but alſo is a great means to help you to recover your Body quickly after every Thruſt, which was one of the Particulars I adviſed in the fourth Rule. Now it is clear, that ſo long as a Man playeth at his full *Stretch*, he can never ſo quickly recover his Body, as he can do when he is at a half *Stretch*, nor ſo ſoon at a half *Stretch*, as he can do when he maketh little or no *Stretch*; and ſeing the keeping of his hinder Heel near to his advanced, preventeth his

his *Stretching*, and the leſs that he *Stretcheth*, the quicklier he will recover his Body, then it doth certainly follow, that the keeping his Heels near other, is a great means to facilitate the quick recovery of his Body after every Thruſt, which was that I deſigned to prove.

So there remains only, that I ſhould ſpeak to the third thing propoſed in my firſt Rule, which I delayed till now, deſigning to cloſe the Reaſons for my Rules with a ſhort Diſcourſe upon it, which is alſo the laſt Advice in this my laſt Rule, to wit, *That* Judgement *accompany all your Actions, both in their Beginning, Procedure, and Cloſe*; and indeed without it all I have ſaid would ſignifie but little, for to make a ſhort Detail, What would it ſignifie to you? your having *Calmneſs*, and *Vigour*, if you had not *Judgement* to direct you, how to make uſe of the Advantage you have by them; And what would the keeping of a Cloſs and Thinn Guard ſignifie to you, if you had not your *Judgement* in defending your ſelf upon it, or purſuing your Adverſary from it; What would it ſignifie alſo to you, that you have Directions to prevent *Contre-temps*, if you have not *Judgement* to know when to Practiſe them, and in ſhort what doth the whole *Art* of the *Sword* ſignifie without *Judgement*, certainly for very little or no uſe at all.

Now

Now as upon the one Hand an *Artist* is liable to a great many Inconveniencies by the want of it, ſo upon the other his having it, puteth him in a Capacity, and ſets him at Liberty, notwithſtanding my Directions I have given him, (although I confeſs they are the ſecureſt I can think upon, or imagine) to chooſe what *Parrades*, and what *Leſſons* he ſhall think moſt fitt and agreeable to the Conſtitution, Play, and Humour of his Adverſary, although thoſe *Leſſons* which he might pitch upon in reſpect of ſome Mens play, would be found to be moſt looſe and uncertain; but in reſpect of the Perſon he is to play them upon Judicious and Good, becauſe by his Judgement he hath found that ſuch *Leſſons* will have as good effect againſt ſuch a Perſon, as the moſt ſecure againſt one of another Humour; for if it were other wayes, and had not his Liberty of chooſe, he would then be tyed up and confined to my Directions; or I may ſay to my particular Judgement, which is the rendering his own uſeleſs, and is juſt contrary to what I ſo much recommended; but then muſt be great care taken, that a Man abuſe not this Liberty, and Allowance which I have given him, and that he be certain his Judgement be not falſe, but Grounded upon Art and Reaſon before he Adventure, and take upon him to make any conſiderable Change or Alteration

teration in Directions, which in the ſtrickeſt Senſe muſt be confeſſed to be the moſt ſecure, againſt all Play and Humours whatſoever.

But that I may end this with a Compariſon, *Fencing* without *Judgement*, is juſt like a Watch without a *Spring*, a Neat peice of Work with a great many fine Wheels, but without any Motion, the want of which maketh her uſeleſs: And ſo is the Art of *Fencing* a curious Art, wherein there are a great many fine *Leſſons*, and excellent *Rules*, but for lack of *Judgement* (which is its *Spring*) all lieth Dead, and is Uſeleſs; but once apply the *Spring*, and ſet it in Motion and a going, and then it becometh a moſt Quick and Lively Exerciſe, and (as a *Watch*) an Ornament fit for all Gentlemen to carry about with them, and as a compleat *Watch* with a *Spring* ſheweth a Man the Hour of the Day, that ſo he may know how to diſpoſe of his time and actions; ſo doth *Fencing* directed by *Judgement*, diſcover to a Man the Hazards and Inconveniencies he is expoſed to, and the means to ſhun and prevent them, by his diſpoſing of the ſeveral Branches of his *Art* ſo and ſo, as ſhe ſhall direct him.

And farther, as the *Spring* of a *Watch* doth cauſe its Hand to point to that Hour, which is moſt needful to be known; ſo doth *Judgement* direct a Man's Hand, to point with his

Sword

Sword, and Thruſt at ſuch parts of his Adverſaries Body, which do moſt expoſe and diſcover themſelves to him, and which are therefore the moſt fit to be Attacqued; ſo that without her, there can be no true *Artiſt*, and where ſhe preſides, all will go well, and as one would wiſh, that is, make the preceeding Rules anſwer my Deſign, which was, infallibly to direct a Man, to defend himſelf againſt the Attacques of all Perſons with *Sharper*, which I doubt not but I have ſufficiently done, if they be exactly obſerved; and I am confident, if they fail, it can be imputed to no defect in the Directions, but to the weakneſs and want of Art in the Perſon, who is to put them in practice, and therefore the blame muſt lye at their Door, and not at mine; for it is Acting, and not Talking, that in this Caſe muſt do the Buſineſs.

Having now finiſhed my Rules, with the Reaſons upon which they are Grounded, I ſhall in the laſt place proceed to the third thing I at firſt propoſed, which was, to give you ſome Obſervations, which will be neither Unneceſſary, nor Unpleaſant.

Thirdly

Thirdly,

Some REMARKES and OBSERVATIONS, &c.

IN the Firſt place I obſerve, let *Ignorants* talk what they pleaſe, and undervalue both *Art* and *Artiſts* as much as is in their power; yet ſtill it is an undeniable Truth, that *Artiſts* have three conſiderable Advantages of them, which is, firſt, *The knowing to Parrie, and actually Parreing a plain Thruſt, better than they can do*; For I ſhall Engage for what any Man pleaſeth, That, ſet up an *Ignorant* to me at the Wall, who was never taught any thing of the *Art* of the *Sword*; I ſhall with the *Art* I have, give him half a Dozen *plain Thruſts* diſtinctly one after another, and it ſhall not be in his power to *Parrie*, or Defend himſelf from one *ſingle Thruſt* of all the ſix, and upon the other Hand, let him Thruſt at me twenty *plain Thruſts* at the Wall, he ſhall not Touch me with one of them; And if this be true (which may be eaſily put to a Trial, whether it be ſo or not) then certainly the *Artiſt* as I ſaid, hath this firſt Advantage of an *Ignorant*,

that he can *Parrie* and Defend himſelf better then the *Ignorant* can do for his Heart.

But perhaps when ſome Perſons are reading this, who have ſeen me when I have been in the *Fencing-ſchools*, receive either *plain Thruſts* at the Wall, from thoſe who were Thruſting upon me, or in Aſſault when I was playing as one would judge my beſt, they will be apt to challenge me, and ask how I come to Aſſert things, the contrary of which they have ſeen with their own Eyes; As firſt, *That I have been ſo far from Parreing twenty* plain Thruſts *upon end, that they have ſeen me hit once in three or four.* And ſecondly, *That in Aſſaulting, notwithſtanding the many exact Rules I pretend to give, to ſave a Man from* Contre temps; yet they have ſeen me ſeveral times *Contre temped*, and it is probable, that if I could not Defend my ſelf with my own Rules from *Contre-temps*, another will Hardly do it: Therefore my Rules will not prove ſo very infallible as I imagine them to be, and that I ſhould not have been ſo poſitive in the Commendation of them, ſeing that I my ſelf know them to have failed me in that which I do moſt commend them for, *viz. Their ſecurity againſt* Contre-temps.

I know thir will be the Thoughts and Objections of ſome, who will peruſe thir Sheet more out of a Curioſity to get ſomething to

Objec

Object against me, then a desire to reap any Profit or Advantage by them, and therefore I thought fit to set them down in this place, that so I might Answer them.

As to the first, I do not believe that any Man will say, he ever saw me receive a *plain Thrust* at the Wall from any *Ignorant*, which is what I affirmed, I would Defend my self from; for if I were not able with the *Art* I have certainly to Defend my self at the Wall, from the *plain Thrusts* of all *Ignorants*, I should then throw down my *Fleuret*, and undervalue *Fencing* so much, that I should never more enquire after it, or any wayes encourage the Professors of it, but should do all that lay in my power to discover its insufficiency, that Gentlemen might not be for the Future Imposed upon and Cheated, both out of their Money & Time by it. But although I deny my being hitt at the Wall by the *plain Thrusts* of *Ignorants*; yet I confess I have been often hitt by *Artists*, and I do not almost remember that ever I was hitt with *plain Thrusts*, since I understood any thing of this *Art*, but what was given me either by those who were actually Scholars at the Time, and therefore were no *Ignorants*; or those who had been once Scholars, and therefore also no wayes deserved the Name of *Ignorants*, and for my being hitt with a *plain*

Thruſt by ſuch, I do no deny it, neither doth it any wayes reflect upon me, becauſe for one *Sword man* to be hitt with a *plain Thruſt* by another, is no Diſparagement at all, but a very conſiderable one it is, if an *Artiſt* cannot infallibly Defend himſelf againſt the *plain Thruſts* of any *Ignorant*, and that I am not able to do that, I poſitively deny, and refers the Probation of it to a Trial, when ever it ſhall be required by Perſons who are worth the giving Satisfaction to in ſuch a Matter; therefore when ſuch Perſons accuſe me of being hitt with *plain Thruſts*, they would do well to be ſo ingenuous as to confeſs, that thoſe Thruſts were really given me by *Artiſts*, which I ſhall willingly confeſs, and not by *Ignorants*, which I poſitively deny, for if that were, they would indeed have good Reaſon to laugh both at me and my Directions.

But as to the ſecond, which is, *My receiving Contre-temps in Aſſaults, notwithſtanding of what I could do to prevent them*, which not only diſcovers the inſufficiency of my Rules to prevent *Contre-temps*, but alſo my diſingenuity in Commending, and Accounting Rules to be Infallible, which I by my own proper Experience have found oftner then once, to be both Fallible and Uncertain.

This Objection I confeſs cometh ſomewhat cloſer

closer to me than the former did, and I believe I have started it so fairely, that none who considers either this or the former, but will confess, I have said as much both against my self, and to make this *Art* of no Repute, as any *Ignorant* whatsoever could do, and I the rather like to make all the Objections possible against it, that People may be convinced I deal above Board, and that there lyeth no Cheat in the Matter; and that also by Answering all Objections, I may in a manner (by reasoning so fairely with them) force them to confess and acknowledge, that the *Art* of the *Sword* is not only a Pleasant, but also an Useful and Necessary *Art*, worthy of the Study of all, but more especially of the *Gentry*.

But in Answer to the Objection, although I confess I have received many *Contre-temps*, and notwithstanding of all the *Art* I have, do still Fear them when I am Assaulting, and although I might also alledge what I did in the Answer, to the preceeding Objection, that all the *Contre-temps* ever I received were from *Artists*, (for I positively deny that any *Ignorant* can give an *Artist* a reall *Contre-temps*, which I sufficiently made appear in my Reasons for the Seventh Rule, to which I refer you) and the most part of the *Thrusts*, that were Exchanged one for another, were also for the most Part from *Artists*

and not from *Ignorants*, and consequently no disparagement to me; yet passing by that, and granting these exchanged Thrusts were given by *Ignorants*, I shall give you two Reasons, the one shewing why any *Artist*, be he never so Expert, may come to receive one Thrust for another from an *Ignorant*, and the other shewing that he may receive either a real *Contre-temps*, or one Thrust for another from an *Artist*, and yet that it can be no reflection upon my Rules, which, as I said, will prove still infallible if exactly observed.

And the Reason of the first (which is, any *Artists* receiving one Thrust for another from an *Ignorant*) is that when People Assault, it is commonly with *Blunts*, and when an *Ignorant* who undervalueth the *Art* of the *Sword*, and trusteth all to his own Forewardness is desired by an *Artist* to shew his Natural Play, he very well considering that he can receive no prejudice by his being hitt with a blunt *Fleuret*, Rusheth and Rambleth still forewards (let him receive never so many Thrusts) until he either hitteth the *Artist* with one of his Rambling Thrusts, or other wayes cometh so clos, that the *Artist* must inclose with him, and he thinketh, if he hath given the *Artist* but one Thrust (although he himself should receive three or four in the time they are playing) that he hath carried the Day, and quite

run

run down the Art of *Fencing*, whereas if they were either to play with Real *Sharps*, or with *Fleurets* having a quarter of an Inch of a point beyond the button, I make not the least doubt, but their rambling would be a little slower, and they would take better notice to what they did, it being Natural even for the most Foreward and Boldest of Men, to endeavour to save themselves by putting a little stop to their Pursute, when they perceive a Sharp point opposite to, and ready to wound, them, and without which stop or pause, they are sensible they might run the Risk, if not of losing their Life; yet at least of being hurt, and so smarting for their rash Forewardness: so this is the Reason why *Artists* may receive one Thrust for another from *Ignorants*, to wit, *Their Assaulting commonly with* Blunts; Therefore to prevent this inconveniency, if I were to play with an *Ignorant* for a Wager, I would play alwayes with pointed *Fleurets*, and then in GOD's Name let him Ramble his Belly full; For in that case I would know a way to come at him, which might perhaps cause him repent his Forewardness.

But the Reason of the second, (which is that an *Artist* may either receive a Real *Contre temps* or one Thrust for another, (commonly called *Exchanged Thrusts*) from another *Artist*) is that

that although they play never so warrily, yet if they fail in the least, to make use of the exact contraries to *Contre-temps* and Thrusts from the *Reposte*, which I have given them, they expose themselves to both, and I must confess, the Directions are so Nice and Difficult to be performed, that there are even but few *Sword-men*, who are able to put them exactly in practice; so that it is not the defect of the Rules, but the Fault of the *Artist*, in not observing them strictly in practice, that is, the cause of his being either *Hitt*, *Contre-temped*, or *Reposted*: This Reason I also give for my receiving any of the Three in Assault from *Artists*, or the first and last from *Ignorants*; and I much doubt, if it be possible for ordinary *Artists* to observe them altogether exactly, however, the nearer they come to the exact Observance of them, they are certainly so much the securer; And if it be asked why I give Rules so difficult, that neither, I my self, nor other *Sword-men* when they are even at their greatest perfection can without a great deal of difficulty exactly observe? It is Answered, That in this, I Resemble the *Divines*, who although they give most excellent Rules for Holy Living and Dying, which cannot but be confessed by all *Christians*, to be most *Rational* and *Orthodox*; yet find great Difficulty themselves to Live up to that pitch of *Mortification*

cation and *Holineſs*, which they require exactly of others under the pain of *Eternal Damnation*; and yet none will be ſo bold as to ſay, becauſe thoſe Rules are not but with great Difficulty exactly obſerved, that therefore they are not ſufficient, and infallibly certain, to bring Salvation to all who exactly obſerve, and ſquare their Lives and Actions conform to them: The Parallel I confeſs betwixt thir two Subjects is altogether unequal; yet the Compariſon will hold good, that although an *Artiſt* may receive a Thruſt, or be *Contre-temped* or *Reſpoſted*, becauſe of his failing to obſerve exactly my Directions; yet that the Directions may be, and are in themſelves abſolutely ſufficient and infallible, for the preſervation of one who exactly obſerves them, from all kind of Thruſts whatſoever, I doubt not but what I have ſaid, will be thought to be, by all rational Men, a ſufficient Anſwer, both to the Objections, and for proving the ſufficiency of my Rules, therefore I ſhall proceed where I left; And ſhew, that.

The ſecond Advantage *Artiſts* have over *Ignorants*, is, in *Planting* or *Adjuſting* a Thruſt, which no Man will controvert, ſeing it is not to be imagined, that an *Ignorant* who perhaps did never thruſt ſix Thruſts in his Life-time, can be ſo certain to hitt the part of the Body he aimeth

aimeth at, as an *Artist* will be, who hath been taught how to *Plant*, and is now and then practising himself with it.

And the Third is the having of *Judgement*, for I suppose all *Artists* to have that, otherwayes they are really no *Artists* but *Ignorants* in Masquerad, that is to say, they pretend to *Art*, because they have been some time at the *Fencing school*, and so under that Cloak of being once a Scholar, they conceal their *Ignoraece*; but if they be real *Artists* they must have the *Judgement* of the *Sword*, and that no *Ignorant* can have, because it is unseparably joyned to the Art it self, and is only acquired by practising of it, and that no *Ignorant* can pretend to, who never was at the Pains and Trouble, so much as to enquire after it, let alone to be at the Toile to gain it by practice, which is the only true way to come at it.

Now the Advantage an *Artist* hath over an *Ignorant*, by having this *Judgement*, is that by it he can know when such and such a Part of his Adversaries Body is open to him, and what *Lessons* are most proper to offend such parts as are exposed, and even although his Adversary should not be Open but upon a Closs Guard, it furnisheth him with means to make him discover himself and give an Open: As also it Teacheth him in some measure to understand

and

and know, when, and at what part of his own Body, his Adversary designes to Attacque him: all this and a great deal more it doth to an *Artist*, but an *Ignorant* not having it, he is frustrate of all these preceeding Advantages, and therefore certainly at a great deal of loss for the want of it, so that it cannot be denied, but this of having *Judgement* is the Third considerable Advantage, that all true *Artists* have over *Ignorants*. I could give you several other Instances in which *Artists* have considerable Advantages, but I think what I have said sufficient as to this Particular.

Secondly, I observe that in the *Fencing-schools* (and that not only of this Kingdom, but *England* and *France* also) there are several Abuses, and things committed which I would have rectified, both for the Benefit of the Scholars, and Reputation of the Masters; although I know it will be thought somewhat strange, that after having said so much in Commendation of *Fencing* it self, I should at last reflect upon its Professors and Teachers.

But to that I Answer, That although the Art be Grounded upon undeniable Truths and infallible Reasons; yet that is no Argument, but many who profess it may be subject to Errours, for I am far from attributing Infallibility to them: And I confess I am sorry, I should

ſhould be neceſſitate to differ from many of them, in circumſtances ſo conſiderably tending to the accompliſhment and perfecting of *Sword-men*, but my Opinion being backed with ſo many, and ſtrong Reaſons (the Truth and Weight whereof I earneſtly recommend to the ſerious Reflection of the Reader,) I cannot but maintain and defend it; until by as ſtrong and convincing Reaſons as I have given for it, I am perſwaded of the contrary.

Seing therefore my Propoſals are grounded upon Reaſon, and not upon other Mens practices, I expect they will convince me by it, for that practice which is againſt Reaſon, is but deceitful and falſe, and as it is to the Eternal Fame of the great DUKE of *Newcaſtle*, that he was the firſt who Rectified the Abuſes of Riding in the *Academies*, by finding out a new and infallible Method for dreſſing Horſes, which was not thought of before, and which at firſt had no doubt many Oppoſers, until from the reaſonableneſs and great Succeſs it had, they were neceſſitate to acknowledge its Excellency and Certainty: So I hope I ſhall have the Honour to be one of the firſt who hath publickly propoſed the Rectifying of Abuſes commonly committed in *Fencing-ſchools*.

The firſt whereof is, *The giving Scholars at their very firſt Entering to the School, heavy* Fleurets

to

to take their Leſſons with; And the Reaſon they give is, *Becauſe* (ſay they) *the uſing a weighty* Fleuret *ſtrengthneth their* Arms *and* Wreſts, *and maketh them when they come afterwards to Aſſault with light* Fleurets, *to handle them a great deal more Eaſily and Nimbly, then they would have done, had they been ſtill accuſtomed to play with light ones.*

All this I grant, for it cannot be denied, but that which I condemn, is, their giving theſe heavy *Fleurets* to Schollars at their very firſt entring to them, when they underſtand not ſo much as how to give in a *Plain Thruſt*, or to move their *Fleuret* regularly any way, for it is certain that they never being accuſtomed to move their *Wreſts*, the firſt time that they uſe that Motion it will be a trouble to them, and make their *Sinewes* Ake, although they had nothing in their Hands at all, let alone a ſtiff heavy *Fleuret*, juſt as a Man when he is firſt Learning to *Elonge* or ſtretch, the *Sinewes* of his *Thighs* will Ake for a Day or two after, although he force not himſelf to a full *ſtretch:* And as it would be thought a little ſtrange for a Maſter to force a young Schollar the very firſt or Second Day after his firſt entring to the School to his full *Stretch*, or before he hath by cuſtome made *Elonging* familiar and eaſy to him; ſo I ſay, at the beginning a Schollar ſhould make uſe of a very light *Fleuret* untill

by

by a little Practice and Uſe, his *Wreſt* be acquainted with the turns of the *Parrades* and Motions of the *Leſſons*, and then, and not till then (which will be about three Weeks, or a Month at moſt after his firſt entring) ſhould be given him a weighty *Fleuret* to ſtrengthen his *Wreſt* and *Nerves*, and with that he ſhould alwayes take his *Leſſons*, and *Parrie* his Adverſaries plain *Thruſts* at the wall, the uſing of which, will undoubtedly make him handle a light *Fleuret* or Sword, as he ſhall have occaſion for them, a great deal more firmly & nimbly, then if he had alwayes uſed a light *Fleuret*.

For (to make a Compariſon) as it is the Common Cuſtom for *Dancing Maſters* abroad, to wear plates of *Leed* betwixt the plies of the Soles of their Ordinary walking Shoes, that ſo they may feel themſelves as it were Lighter, and Cleevrer, when they put on their Light *Dancing* Shoes; ſo will the conſtant uſing of weighty *Fleurets*, make Men when they are to aſſault with Light ones, or to make uſe of their *Sword*, to think them a great deal Lighter then really they are, and the very Fancy of that will cauſe them make both their *Parrades*, and *Thruſts* quicker then otherwayes they would; But, as I ſaid, their *Wreſts* ſhould be alwayes made Supple, and firſt accuſtomed with very Light *Fleurets*, untill they be three Weeks

Weeks or a Month at *School*, and then it is a fit time to give them heavy *Fleurets* to take their *Lessons* withal and not sooner, unless their Masters designe to weaken and ruine their *Wrists* and *Nerves*. And this Leads me to

The Second thing I observe, is not so much Practised in our *Scots* and *English Schools* as I could wish (for I acknowledge the **French** are free of it) which is the constant *Parreing*, and *Thrusting* of *Plain Thrusts* upon one another at the wall, this is the only thing which maketh a Man to have a Swift Hand upon his Pursute, and a firme and sure *Parrade* upon his Defence, and there is no other Reason for the **French** their having so Swift a Hand in giving in their *Plain Thrusts*, but their constant accustoming themselves to *Thrust* upon their commarads at the Wall, or sometimes at a Mark in the Wall, when they want the opportunity of having one to *Thrust* upon; therefore seing the having a Swift Hand is of such advantage, and the most certain way to acquire it, is, to frequent the *Thrusting* and *Parreing* of *Plain Thrusts* at the Wall, and that (as I have Orderd) with heavy *Fleurets* I think it will be thought but Reasonable that I advise the Rectifying of this, as well as the preceeding abuse.

The Third thing I observe, is, that they burden their Scholars with too many *Lessons*, especi-

eſpecialy *Offenſive ones*, whereas if they would teach them fewer *Offenſive Leſſons* (for they will come to them Naturally) and keep them cloſer to the *Defenſive* Part, People would ſee fewer *Contre-temps*, and better *Sword-men* in the Schools, then for the moſt Part they do.

The fourth, is, the ſuffering Scholars generally to take their *Leſſons* in their Cloaths, a thing which hindereth a Mans Body to be ſo ſoon broken, and made Pliable as otherwayes it would, becauſe a Man cannot ſtretch ſo freely in his Coat as he can do in a *Weſt-coat*, or *Veſt*, & alſo it ſpoileth his Cloths, & if he *Fenceth* much, the ſweat maketh him uneaſy the whole Day thereafter, whereas Playing in a *Weſt-coat* a Man is both Nimbler, and more at eaſe the reſt of the Day, his Coat being dry when he goeth from the School, which perhaps otherwayes would be all torn and neaſtie with the ſmell of Sweet and duſt, which would be both uneaſie to him, and unpleaſant to thoſe he is going to converſe with

Therefore in my humble opinion no Scholar ſhould be ſuffered to take his *Leſſons* in his Cloaths untill he be well Grounded, and then in oppoſition to what I have been ſaying, I am of the opinion that he ſhould for the moſt part both take his *Leſſons*, and *Aſſault* in his Cloaths and walking Shoes, for this will confirm him in his Play, and make him upon all Encoun-

ters

ters ready, without being surprized, to oppose the Pursuites and Attaques of his Adversary, with as great ease, as if he were stript and in his *Fencing* shoes, now this being of great Importance to Compleat and Confirme a *Sword-man* in his Play, it should by all means be looke to and taken notice of, that Schollars before they be well Grounded both in *Lessons* and practice, do not Play in their Cloaths, and that afterwards when they are Grounded they should, to strengthen and confirm them in it.

The Fifth is the suffering Schollars so soon to *Assault* before they be at least of two or three Months standing, and this is also one of the Reasons, why People see so many *Contre-temps* exchanged in the Schools, because when they begin to *Assault* so soon, they have neither Art nor *Judgement* to shun or prevent them: and were it for no more but this, I think the Masters should rectifie it, that they would find it for their own particular Profit and Advantage; for when once their Schollars are accustomed to *Assault*, they think it almost below them to take any more *Lessons*, but think they have attained enough of the *Art*, and so Quite the School, and there is an end of them, and by being at the School, they get the Name of *Sword-men*, which is enough to them, but GOD knows, if they really deserve it, where-

as if they were kept longer from *Assaulting*, they would both continue longer their Scholars, and at the end prove better *Sword-men*.

The Sixth and last thing I shall take notice of in *Fencing* Schools, is the neglect of teaching the *Blow* as well as the *Thrust*, and this both the *English* and *French* Masters are guilty of, as well as our *Scots*; And I am apt to think it may proceed from a mistake, in thinking that the teaching of the *Blow* would be prejudicial to the quick performance of the *Thrust*, but whoever may be prepossest with this false Opinion, I shall endeavour to convince them of the contrary by what followeth, and of the necessity there is for a Mans being taught, and understanding both *Blow* and *Thrust*, to be reputed a Compleat *Sword-man*.

Now the chief reasons, or objections they give against teaching of the *Blow*, *or Broad-sword*, at the same time with the *Small*, are three; The first is, that it doth not teach a Man to stretch himself so much as the small *Sword* doth, and therefore will not supple and break his Body so well, and consequently not give him that agility of *Wrest* and *Limbs*, which the *Small Sword* doth.

In answer to which, I say first, that it is a great mistake, to think that the *Blow* doth not teach a Man to stretch, as well as the *Thrust*, for

for in Learning the *Thruſt*, there is nothing that maketh a Man to ſtretch, and to acquire nimbleneſs and agility in his *Limbs*, but Advancing, Reteiring, Elonging, and ſometimes Jumping back after the giving in of a *Thruſt*, now all this a Man doth when he is taught the *Blow*, or *Broad-ſword*, and therefore there is no difference betwixt the learning of the *Broad ſword*, and *Small*, for the acquiring of agility and nimbleneſs.

I know ſome will ſay, that the chief difference conſiſts in the *Elonging*, becauſe in learning the *ſmal-ſword*, a Man is taught *to ſtretch himſelf a great deal more*, then when he is learning the *broad*, or *back-ſword*; but this is likewiſe a miſtake, becauſe thoſe who teach the true Art of the *Broad-ſword*, cauſe their *Schollars* when they take their *Leſſons*, make their full *Elonges* or *Stretches*, and likewiſe recover, and jump backoff thoſe *Stretches*, as frequently, as if they were taught the *Smal*, & thoſe Maſters who teach not the *Broad*; *or Back-ſword* after this manner, diſcover only their own *Ignorance*, *but no imperfection in the Art*: and although I am fully perſwaded, that the *Small-ſword* hath the Advantage of the *Broad*, as to the quickneſs and ſubtility of its Motions; yet I am convinced it hath no Advantage over it, as to the rendring a Man more Agile and Nimble; And therefore that the teaching of

the *Blow* at the ſame time with the *Thruſt*, can be no wayes prejudicial to the quick performance of the *Thruſt* afterwards, as a man ſhall have occaſion for it.

Secondly, I ſay the teaching of the *Blow* at the ſame time with the *Thruſt*, is not only as I have made appear, no wayes prejudicial to a Mans ſtretching his *Body* and *Limbs*, but alſo doth not hinder him to acquire that agility and nimbleneſs of the *Wreſt*, which is required, to have a ſwift Hand in the giving in of any *Thruſt*, for let any Man but conſider the turns of the *Wreſt* in making any of the *Parrades*, or playing any of the *Leſſons* belonging to the *Small-ſword*, and the turns of it in performing the *Blows* and *Flouriſhes* of the *Broad*, and he will find the turns in the *Broad* to be a great deal more Circular and difficult, and conſequently fitter for the Suppling and Breaking of a Mans *Wreſt*, that ſo it may become Nimble and Agile, then any *Parrade* or *Leſſon* of the *Small*, and there is no great Wonder it ſhould be ſo, ſeing it hath its Riſe and foundation from the *Art* of the *Broad*, for I believe there are but few who are *Ignorant* of the antiquity of the *Art* of the *Broad-ſword*, and how that it was long made uſe of before ever the *Small* was found out, or heard of, and I am ſo far from thinking the *Art* of the *Small-ſword* a particular

Art

Art by it ſelf, that I am fully convinced, it is only the *Art* of the *Broad* more refined, and made more perfect, in ſo far as at firſt the *Blow* was only made uſe of without any *Thruſt*, and the *Art* of the *Small-ſword* perfecteth it, by teaching how the *Thruſt* may be joyned to the *Blow* without any the leaſt confuſion, or hinderance, of the *Blow*, as occaſion ſhall offer. Now how the teaching of both at one & the ſame time hath run into deſuetude, I confeſs I cannot comprehend, but certainly it is a neglect and omiſſion, which all who deſire to be compleat *Sword-men*, ſhould endeavour to have rectified.

The Second objection is, that grant the teaching of the *Blow* at the ſame time with the *Thruſt*, doth not hinder a Mans Stretching, or his acquiring the ſame agility of Body and nimbleneſs of *Wreſt*, which he would do if he were only taught the *Small*; yet ſay ſome, there is ſuch a vaſt difference betwixt the performance of a *Blow*, and the giving in of a *Thruſt*, that if a Man were taught to do them both at one time, the one would quite confound the other, and make a Man when he is taking his *Leſſon* with the *Small*, to give a *Blow* when he ſhould give a *Thruſt*, and when he is taking his *Leſſon* with the *broad*, to give in a *Thruſt* when he ſhould make a *Blow*, which would render

render both the *Arts* altogether useless to him, and therefore a Man had better perfect himself fully in the one, before he attempt the other, then desire to be taught them both at one, and the same time.

Here is (one would think) a very strong and reasonable objection, but yet it shall be very clearly and shortly answered, and first, I say betwixt the *Parrades* and *Guards* of the *Broad-sword*, and *Parrades* and *Guards* of the *Small*, at least the most part of them, there is but little Difference: for the *Parrades* in Quart and Terce of the *Medium-guard*, do resemble the first *Parrades* in *Quart* and *Terce* of the *Smal-sword*, & the *Parrads* of the *Hanging-guard*, do likewise resemble the second *Parrades* in *Terce* of the *Smal-sword* with a slooping point: thus much for the *Parrades*, and as for the *Guards*, the posture of the *Medium-guard* is little Different from that of the *Quart-guard* in the *Small*, the *outside-guard* little different from the *Terce*, and the *Hanging-guard* little different from the *Terce-guard* in the *Smal-sword* with a *slooping point*; so that the difference that are betwixt the *Parrades* and *guards* of the *Small sword*, and *Parrades* and *Guards* of the *Broad* are so inconsiderable, that I am confident no Man who understandeth both, will say, that the teaching the *Parrades* and *Guards* of the one can be any ways Prejudicial

judicial to the teaching the *Parrads* and *Guards* of the other at the ſame time.

But Secondly, if there be any conſiderable difference, it lieth in the offenſive part, in that there is as they ſay, a vaſt difference betwixt the delivering of a *Blow*, and the giving in of a *Thruſt*, and this is that which they maintain will ſo much Confound a Man that it will make him *Strike* when he ſhould *Thruſt*, & *Thruſt* when he ſhould *Strike*.

For my part, I confeſs I cannot but admire how People of *Judgement* can talk at this rate, for can there be a greater Difference betwixt the performance of any *Stroak*, and the giving in of a *Thruſt*, then there is betwixt the performance of one *Leſſon* in the *Smal-ſword*, and the *Playing* another in the ſame *Art*: no certainly, for there is as great, yea more Difference betwixt a *Plain Thruſt*, and *Feint a la teſt*, or betwixt *Feint a la teſt*, and *Binding*, or betwixt *Binding* & *Paſſing*, or betwixt *Paſſing* and *Quarting* and *Volting*, then there can be pretended to be betwixt the giving in of a *Thruſt*, and the making of any *Blow* whatſoever, ſo that if upon the one Hand it be Pleaded that the Difference betwixt *Blow* and *Thruſt*, is the Reaſon why they ſhould not be taught together, becauſe the one would confound the other; I plead upon the other Hand

and

and for the same Reason, that nothing should be taught of the *Small sword* at the same time but a *Plain Thrust*, because the Difference betwixt it and the other *Lessons* is as considerable, if not more, and therefore as apt to confound a Man, because when he should *Play* one *Lesson*, he will make use of another as far out of purpose and season, as the making of a *Slash* would be when he should give a *Thrust*, but all this is so ridiculous, that I shall say no more of it; for a Man who will maintain this, must also maintain, that a Man cannot learn any two different Exercises at once, *as for Ex:* the Exercises of the *Pike* and *Musket*, or to Play upon the *Guittar* and *Lute*, or to *Dance* a *Courant* and *Minue* without confounding the one with the other, because they have all Different Motions; which is a most extravagant opinion, and the contrary of which we see dayly practiced not only by Men, but even by Beasts; for I believe there are but few Gentlemen who have been abroad, and have not seen Horses when they have been either Breaking for the Manage, or to confirm them in it, get most different *Lessons* for that effect in one Morning, as one to supple their *Shoulders*, another to put them upon their *Haunches*, one for *Passager*, another for the *Terra a Terra*, one for *Corvetting*, another for *Crouppading*, and in fine, one for *Capricoling*, and another for *Balotading*.

ing, and all this (as I said) in one Morning, now the motions of the Horses limbs are different in all those Lessons and Aires, and seeing the difference of the motions doth not confound an irrational Horse, nor hinder him to perform what ever Lesson or Aire his Rider requireth of him; I conclude, That the difference betwixt *Blow* and *Thrust*, will far less confound or hinder a Rational Man to make use of either, as it shall please him, or his Master to demand them of him. But that I may the better both vindicate my Opinion as to this, and perswade you, that it is not meerly a *speculative fancy*, but a most practicable, and usefull improvement of the *Art of the Sword*; I do recommend to all who shall not be convinced of it by the reasonable Arguments I have proposed, that they would Repair to *William Macbries School*, where they will see both *Blow* & *Thrust*, taught at the same time with a great deal of ease and expedition, and without the least confusion.

The third and last objection, is this, that supposing the Teaching of the *Blow* at the same time with the *Thrust*, be no ways prejudicial to the quick performance of the *Thrust*, and that all I said in favours of the *Blow* should hold good & true, yet it is altogether unnecessary to teach the *Blow*, because a Man that is absolutly Master of the *Thrust*, can supply all the wants

of

of the *Blow* by it, and seing the *Thrust* hath so great Advantage over the *Blow*, as to the danger and deadlineſs of its wounds, which no *Sword-man* will deny, and that it can always be made uſe of in place of a *Blow*, therefore the Teaching of the *Blow* is not neceſſary, but ought to be foreborn.

You ſee by this objection they endeavour wholly to condemn and exclude the *Blow*, not as being any wayes prejudicial to the quick performance of the *Thruſt*, but as being in it ſelf altogether uſeleſs, and not to be regarded, in reſpect of the Advantage the *Small-ſword* hath of it, by the Dangerous Wounds it maketh, which prove, for the moſt part Mortall, whereas commonly the Wounds of the *Broad-ſword* are not ſo Dangerous, which in my Opinion inſinuats as much, as that a Man with a *Small-ſword* ſhould not ſtand to hazard his Receiving of a *Blow* for the giving of a *Thruſt*.

I confeſs I am as much convinced of the Advantage the *Thruſt* hath of the *Blow* as to it's Wound, as any Man can be, as you may ſee in my *Scots Fencing-Maſter*, but that which I *condemn* is that an *Artiſt* ſhould truſt to the difference of Wounds, and ſo venture a *Contre-temps*, and not rather endeavour firſt to defend himſelf by his *Art* from the *Blow*, and then give in his *Thruſt* for a Man may chance to miſplant his *Thruſt*

after

after he hath received a very ſevere Stroak, perhaps near to the loſs of his Hand or Arm, and then I am confident, he will think it had been better *Judgment*, and he would have ſhewn more of his *Art*, if he had defended firſt the Stroak, and then have given in his *Thruſt*: but paſſing over this,

I aſſure you there is no *Smal-ſword-man*, be he never ſo expert, but will find himſelf at a conſiderable Diſadvantage in offering to defend a Stroak, unleſs he particularly underſtand ſome thing of the defence of the *Blow*, or *Broad ſword*, and for my own part I found ſo great a Diſadvantage in not being acquainted with the *Parrades* and *Blows* of the *Broad-ſword*, when I had occaſion to Play with the *Fleuret* againſt the *Cudgell*, (for I was once almoſt of this opinion my ſelf) that I was never at eaſe untill I found out a particular poſture for the *Small-ſword* againſt the *Broad*; which I did, and it is alſo ſet down in my *Scots Fencing-Maſter*, but my curioſity not reſting there, I reſolved to learn a little of the *Broad-ſword* alſo, which I did in a very ſhort time, and ſince I find it a great deal more eaſy to me to defend my ſelf either with *Broad* againſt a *Broad*, or with a *Small* againſt a *Broad*, then I did at that time; and the reaſon is, becauſe I now know both the *Parrades* and *Leſſons* peculiar to the *Broad*, which before I was ignorant of,

and

and which put me to the trouble, as I said, of finding out a particular posture with the *Small-sword* for it, which did indeed at that time answer my design, but doth so now much more, because I understand the *Art* of the *Broad-sword* better now then I did then.

I tell you this, not out of any Vanity to commend my self, but that you may understand what Advantage there is in being taught both *Blow* and *Thrust*, and let any man who doubteth it, and hath only been taught to *Thrust*, and to Defend a *Thrust*, make but a trial, and I am confident he will find the same difficulty I did, and be soon of the same opinion I was when I wrot my other Book, to which I Refer him, and of which I am still; "*That every Man who desires to be a* "*Compleat* Sword-man *should Learn both* Blow "*and* Thrust, *and unless a Man do it I do not see* "*how he can pretend to the Name of a Compleat* "Sword-man, *for if a Man Understand only the* "Thrust *and not the* Blow, *then he may deserve* "*the Name of a Compleat* Small-sword-man, *but* "*not of a Compleat* Sword-man, *because he is* Ig-"norant *of the* Blow. In likemaner if a Man understand only the *Blow* and not the *Thrust*, he may deserve the Name of a Compleat *Broad sword man*, but not of a Compleat *Sword-man*, because he Understandeth not also the *Thrust*, so that in my Opinion to deserve the name

name of a Compleat *Sword-man*, a Man must understand both *Blow* and *Thrust*, otherwise that Title doth no wayes belong to him, neither can he with any confidence pretend to it.

But besides what I have said, there is no *Sword-man* will deny, but that it sometimes so falleth out when Men are Playing together, that it would be more convenient to make a *Blow* then to give in a *Thrust*, and upon the other Hand, at other times more convenient to give in a *Thrust* then to make a *Blow*, so that if a Man know not how to deliver a *Blow* as well as a *Thrust*, he is upon these occasions at a visible loss and disadvantage, whereas if he knew how to perform both, he would alwayes know how to behave himself according to these several circumstances without the least confusion.

But why need I in this Place endeavour to prove the necessity of that, the contrary whereof is condemned by the constant practice of most Nations in the World, for do we not see the generality of the People both Gentle and Simple, when they go to the Warrs, provide themselves for the most part with *Sheering-Swords*, and why would they do that, if it were not out of an opinion, that they think they may have occasion to *Strike* as well as to *Thrust*, and that they think the *Thrust* alone would not be so effectual, as when it can be joined

joined to the *blow*, and that they are, being thus provided, in a better capacity to make use of either at pleasure, and accordingly as occasion shall offer; From all which I conclude, That there is an absolute necessity for a Man who intends to be a *compleat Sword-man*, to be taught and understand both *Blow* and *Thrust*, and I think it a thing so indispensably necessary, that the learning of it by all persons who understand it not, whether *Masters* or others, at all times, and at any Age whatsoever, can no ways reflect upon their *Judgement* in the Art they profess, nor be any wayes derogatory from the reputation they have already had of being good *small-Sword-Men*, and the like I say in behalf of the *Thrust*, to those who profess only the *Broad*, so that I think neither of them should think it below them to be instructed of other, in what they are ignorant of, and of what is so useful and necessary for the compleat perfecting of the *Art of the Sword*, and consequently of *Sword-men*.

Seing therefore (as I think I have sufficiently made appear) there is an absolute necessity for understanding both *blow* and *thrust* to be reputed a *compleat Sword-Man*, I must recommend the use of the *Sheering-sword*, and I would advise all without exception, who wear now only *Rapiers*, to wear light and narrow *Sheering-*

swords

swords, at least *Rapiers* with good edges, which will both answer the design of the *small-sword* as to *thrusting*, and of the *Broad* as to the *blow* or *striking*, and so put a Man in a capacity of using either as he shall think fit, when it shall be his misfortune to be engaged, and which will be as light and convenient to carry, as any ordinary *walking-sword*.

Its like the *Fencing-Masters* in this Kingdom may think I have gone too great a length upon this subject, in so far as I take upon me to play the Doctor, and offer as it were in a *Magisterial way*, to teach them their Duty, and also in that I seem to tax some of them of *ignorance*, in not understanding the *blow* as well as the *thrust*, because I recommend the learning of the *blow* to Masters, if they be ignorant of it as well as to others.

But that they may not mistake me, I desire they would consider that this preceeding discourse (anent the abuses in Schools) doth not particularly aim at them, but at all *Fencing-Masters* in general, both at Home and Abroad, who are guilty of them; and that they are really guilty of them, I appeal to all who have frequented their Schools; therefore I expect our Masters will not take what I have said as a particular reflection upon them, although I cannot deny but they suffer the same abuses to

be

be committed in their *Schools*; and therefore muſt excuſe me, if I cenſure them with the other Maſters, untill I find them rectified.

And let them not think it will paſs as a ſufficient reaſon for them to continue theſe preceeding abuſes in their *Schools*, by ſaying it is the cuſtome abroad, and that they ſuffer nothing to be done in their Schools, but what is done in the Schools of other Kingdoms, and that becauſe it is not the cuſtome for any *Small-ſword* Maſter abroad to teach the *Blow* at the ſame time with the *Thruſt*, that therefore they will not do it, becauſe they intend not to be the firſt Beginners and Promoters of any thing which is extraordinary and out faſhion, (which to my particular knowledge is the chief Defence and Language of ſome) this I ſay is but very weak reaſoning, for at that rate there ſhould never have been any *Art* or *Science* found out, or improven, if People had been alwayes reſtricted to the old Root and Footſteps of their Predeceſſors, ſo I expect they will either give me as ſtrong Reaſons againſt the Rectifying of theſe abuſes, (eſpecially the teaching the *Blow* at the ſame time with the *Thruſt*) as I have given for them, otherwayes they muſt pardon me to differ from them, by recommending my own opinion which is grounded upon reaſon, and condemning and Rejecting theirs at leaſt untill they

they produce ſtronger Arguments and Reaſons for it, then hitherto I have heard.

And although this indeed be my Opinion, that *Ignorant* Maſters who underſtand not the *Blow*, ſhould learn it; yet it doth not conclude that I reckon thoſe who profeſs the *Art* of the *Sword* in this Kingdom to be in that Categorie, no, I am farr from having ſo bad an Opinion of them, and I am apt to think the only thing they ſhould be condemned for, and for which I do indeed condemn them, is not that they underſtand not the *Blow* as well as the *Thruſt*, and therefore are not capable to teach it (for if they denied that, they would diſcover too much weakneſs) but that they underſtanding both, ſhould teach only the one, *viz.* The *Thruſt*, and wholly neglect the other, by throwing it out of Doors, this I confeſs is a neglect of ſuch importance, and of ſuch bad conſequence, that I neither can, nor will forebear the giving my earneſt advice, that it, as well as the five preceeding particulars, be rectified, and then I am confident our Schollars ſhall acquire *Art* inferior to none in *Europe*, and our Maſters, by them that repute and Eſteem, which both their abilities, and they, rectifying of ſuch Abuſes, and Omiſſions, do really deſerve.

And I likeways would not have them ſo

Fooliſh as to think, that (by what I have been ſaying in Reference to the teaching both *Blow* and *Thruſt*) I deſign to recommend any Particular Maſter before another, no, I am not ſo mean as to have any ſuch Particular by-end, my deſigne is ſo farr from that, that it is altogether general, and meerly for the Advantage of the *Art*, and to Compleat *Swordmen*; for if Maſters cannot by the *Art*, Care, and Pains they take, recommend themſelves to Schollars, they ſhall never have any from me, becauſe I think all *Maſters* ſhould be reputed, and had in Eſteem, only for their diſtinct and accurate method of teaching, and for the pains they take to cauſe their Schollars underſtand, and comprehend what they are Learning, and not for any recommendation they can get from any Particular Perſon whatſomever, and therefore if they expect any particular recommendation from me, they are hugely deceived, for I wiſh them all alike well, that is to have Flouriſhing Schools, and Expert Schollars, to teſtifie that they are *Maſters* indeed, and not Bunglers, of which there are but too many.

The next thing I obſerve, is, that if all I have ſaid be duely and exactly put in practice, it will infallibly make a *Man* a true *Artiſt*, and if he be truely an *Artiſt*, his having *Art* will

increaſe his boldneſs and courage, and put him in a capacity, not only to preſerve his Life and Honour, but alſo to force as it were a reſpect and eſteem to himſelf, from thoſe, who although they undervalue his *Art*, yet darr not be ſo bold (leaſt he ſhould make them ſmart for it) as publickly to own it, but are rather ſatisfied by their ſilence to acknowledge his dexterity, and that he is to be commended for the pains, and labour, he hath taken to acquire ſo gentile and uſeful an Art.

But ſuppoſe they ſhould openly reflect upon him, and undervalue his Art, by threatning him with that unanſwerable defence, as they think of their *Ignorance*, and infallible Defeater of all Art (I mean by ingaging him to fight with Piſtol, or other ſuch like Fire-weapons) and indeed to hear ſome People talk, one would think that by their gaining this one point, of engaging a *Sword-man* to fight with Fire-armes, they make no doubt, but all will go well with them, and that the day is certainly their own, it being a kind of Proverb amongſt them. "*Is ſuch a Perſon a* "Sword-man, *if it be anſwered*, Yes, *then reply* "*they after a mocking manner*; *What doth it ſig-* "*nifie*? *If I were to engage with him, I could ſoon* "*make his Art of little uſe to him*; *I would take a* "*Piſtol to him, and then I pray you, where is all his*

" *Art of Defence, I believe he will hardly parie a* " *Piſtol Ball with it.* Such diſcourſe as this is but too common amongſt *Ignorants*, and they think when they talk at this rate, they have found the *Philoſopher-ſtone*, which in place of turning every thing into Gold, can turn all their *Ignorance* into the profoundeſt Art and Skill, and all skilful Perſons, *Art*, and *Judgement* into the greateſt *Ignorance*; ſo that in their opinion, *Artiſts* can reap no advantage by what they underſtand, and themſelves can reap all, becauſe they underſtand nothing.

But alas poor *Ignorants*! Their Folly in this is as diſcernable, as their *Ignorance* in the former; and they can pretend to have no more Advantage over a *Sword-man*, by engaging him to make uſe of a Piſtol, then the *Sword-man* can pretend to have over them, which I ſhall endeavour to prove by what followeth.

Although then I confeſs, that there is properly no Defenſive part in uſing of Piſtols, either a Foot or upon Horſe-back, but what all Men are alike Maſter of, I mean to receive the ſhot, and take their hazard of being hit or miſt; for no Man will be ſo fooliſh, as to pretend to parie the ſhot of a Piſtol; yet there are ſome methods, which I think not fit at preſent to mention, that may be uſed to ſhun a ſhot, the which who can neatly make uſe of them,

them, will certainly have an advantage of those who understand them not, but set themselves up like an immovable stock or post, to be shot at.

But supposing all Men alike dextrous as to this point, that is to know no means of avoiding, but meerly to take their hazard of being hit or not; yet I say, in the Offensive part, there may be a vast Advantage acquired; for whosoever will according to the advice in my *Scots Fencing-master*, accustom himself to shot at a Mark, both a Foot and on Horse-back, will, when he is necessitate to use it in earnest, have almost as considerable advantage over his Adversary in knowing to adjust his shot, (supposing his Adversary to be ignorant and not to have practised to adjust his) as he would have had a Foot in adjusting his Thrust, his Adversary being likewise ignorant of the Art of the *Sword*; so that if this Person of whom I am discoursing, and who boasteth so much of the Advantage he will have by using *Pistols*, hath but as little of the practise of *shooting*, as he hath of *Thrusting*, he can then in Reason pretend to no more Advantage by using the *Pistol*, then the *Artist* can, except what meer Chance and Fortune giveth him, which is far from any ground of certainty.

Therefore, I say, he only will probably have the

the Advantage with *Piſtol*, who hath frequented moſt the ſhooting at a Mark, and if neither of them have done that, then none of them can pretend to any viſible Advantage over the other; but what, as I ſaid, is meerly caſual and by chance. But I confeſs, if the *Ignorant* be better skill'd in *ſhooting* then the *Artiſt*, in that caſe he hath an Advantage; and I can ſee no Reaſon why the *Artiſt* ſhould more anſwer the Challenge with *Piſtols*, ſeing he is a better Marks-Man then the *Artiſt*, then he would anſwer the *Artiſt* with *Swords*, becauſe the *Artiſt* was the moſt Adroit at *thruſting*; So that the only way to end this Debate, is, that they either fight with Weapons altogether unknown to both, or otherwiſe do as one of thoſe two Men, who after they had quarrelled, leſt the one ſhould have had any Advantage by Art in the Weapons which might have been made uſe of, did propoſe a Barrel of Gun-powder ſhould be brought to each, in the middle of which, they were to place themſelves, and then with fired Matches to try who could moſt *Manfully*, or I may rather ſay *Madly*, blow up other. And I know no other way but this to decide the Quarrel: For if a *Man* refuſe to fight me with a *Sword*, becauſe he thinketh I am a better *Sword-man* than he, I muſt certainly be a great Fool, if I fight him with a *Piſtol*, becauſe he propoſeth

it

it as a particular Advantage to himself: I know it will be Answered to this, That it is the custome for those who receive the Challenge, to choose the Weapons, and so that will end the Debate, because who ever giveth the Challenge, is in Honour obliged to Answer the other with whatever Weapons he shall propose.

I confess it is so, and I think it most reasonable when a *Man* is forced to fight, that he should have the choice of what Weapon he will venture his Life with; But what I was saying, concerns only such, for some, who after they have given a Challenge, and their Antagonist received it, and appointed *Swords* to be their Weapons, they afterwards getting notice that he is a *Sword-man*, cunningly decline the fighting him with that Weapon, and propose *Pistols*, because of the inequality there would be in making use of *Swords*. Now I say, when a *Sword-man* rancounters with such a Person as this, who first giveth him a Challenge, & then afterwards declines to fight him with the Weapons he proposed, I see, I say, no reason why he should more answer him with *Pistols*, seing he proposed it for a particular Advantage, then the other did him with *Swords*, because he judged it would prove to his disadvantage; for if the Refusal reflect

reflect upon any of the two, it must be certainly upon him who gave the Challenge; Because, although he was so stout as to Appeal, yet had not the Courage to Answer the other with the Weapons he proposed; Therefore I conclude, That a man had far better forbear a Challenge, then decline the Weapons after they are chosen.

But, There is in my humble Opinion, no better way to take away all such Debates, then to live soberly and peaceably, according to the Doctrine and Precepts of that Religion which we profess, and then we shall make use of all those Arts, more for divertisement to our selves, then prejudice to our Neighbours.

Now after what I have said, let any considering Person judge, if an *ignorant*, by ingaging a *Sword-man* to fight with a *Pistol*, hath got so great an Advantage, as to be any wayes a ground of railing at, mocking, or turning into Ridicule the *Art of the Sword*, no certainly, he hath got none, but what the *Artist* may likewise pretend to as well as he; and therefore I would advise such Persons rather to betake themselves to the practice of *Fencing*, and *Shooting*, that so their Advantage may be grounded and depend upon their Art, and not upon such Fancies and Notions, which, if real, are casual; but for the most part, prove Chimerical,

cal, and have only their existence in their *ignorant Brains*, but are below the being regarded, or taken notice of by any Gentleman or Judicious Person, who should ground his thoughts upon Reason, and not in the Air; that if they be examined they may prove solid and durable as Reason, and not volatile and changeable, as the Aerial Foundation upon which they are built, and so discover the Weakness and Ignorance of their first Promoter and Author; But not to insist longer upon this,

I observe in the fourth and last place, that although all I have said in commendation of *Fencing*, were but Stories and Lies, and the vain imaginations of a *Hypocondriack-brain*, yet all *Gentlemen* should practise it, & have an esteem for it, if it were for no other reason but this, that it is a most pleasant divertisement, and an Innocent, Healthful, and Manly Recreation and Exercise for the Body, and although a Man could reap no Advantage by it for the Defence of his Body; yet that its very keeping a Mans joynts and members nimble and cleaver, and in a ready trime, as it were, for any other Divertisement or Exercise, as Tennice, Dancing, Riding, *&c.* should make it Esteemed and Practised by all who are above the rank of Clowns.

For

For to use the words of a Wise-man, "*The understanding of this Noble and Useful Art, is a Quality and Perfection, hardly attainable by those who hold the Plough, and glory in the Goad; who drive Oxen, and are occupied in their Labours, and whose talk is of their Bullocks, who give their mind to make Furrows; and are diligent to give the Kine fodder. No, it agreeth not with the Nature of such; neither is it for the Smith who sitteth by the Anvil, and considereth the Iron work, the vapour of the Fire, wasteth his Flesh, and he sigheth with the heat of the Furnace; the noise of the Hammer and Anvil is ever in his Ears, and his Eyes look still upon the Patern of the thing he maketh.* Such vulgar and undisciplined Minds as those, are not ordinarly capable to conceive the Intricacies. and Excellencies, of this most Gentile and Gentle-manny *Art.*

And although it cannot be denied, but some mean kind of People profess, practise and take delight in it; yet those are Men who are more refined in their Judgements and Inclinations, then the generality of the Vulgar are, and who by the same gentile Inclination they have to follow the Sword, discover that there is in them something more then ordinary, and that they aime at somewhat, above what either their Birth or Education could really make them pretend to; so that I make no doubt,

doubt, but if such Persons had either really been, or had had the Education peculiar to Gentle-men, they would have been in a fitter capacity both to have improven themselves, and better instructed others in that Art, for which they have such a respect and liking.

And if this which I say hold true, then no doubt but the understanding of this Art, belongeth in a more particular manner to Gentlemen, or those who are called *Les Hommes d^e espee*, then to any other; and therefore it is my advice, and I earnestly recommend it to such, not to ungentleman themselves by the neglect and contempt of an Art, which as I have made appear, is so peculiar to, and I may say inseparable from the Name and Character they bear.

An Art so Noble, Useful, and Gentile,
To speak its praises, would a Volume fill;
For when that I, its Merits would display,
My Mouth is stopt, my Muse is at a stay.
It so exceeds all that I can conceive,
I'm forc^d to silence, yet to speak must crave;
But seing all I can express and shew,
Would far come short, of what's its real due,
I shall be short, and only of it say,
It is a Badge, Accomplishment, and Ray,
Which doth adorn all who to understand

Its real Use and Worth, do take in hand,
An Art so useful, that no Gentleman,
Of Valour, Honour, be without it can,
For it to all who carry Sword by side,
Should be a Pilot, and a constant Guide;
Unless they do renounce the Name they bear,
And that which them from others Character:
For my part, I confess I it esteem,
And for my trusty Safe-guard do it deem,
And alwayes will, knowing it ne're deceives,
Any who to it trust and respect gives;
But believe me who despise it wholly,
Ignorance *betray, as well as Folly,*
And will repent them (when it is too late,)
They trusted none to it, so much, to Fate.

I confess I am neither *Poet* nor *Versificator*, yet those Lines offering to my Fancy, and relating to the Subject, I thought fit to set them down; if they are good its by chance, if not, pass them over; I wrote them for my divertisement, and its like had it not been to divert me, I had not taken the pains to write so much either of *Fencing*, or in Commendation of it as I have done; However what I have Writ, I recommend to your perusal, which I think can hardly be refused, seing it cost me a great deal of more pains in Writting, then it will do you in Reading; and if you despise my offer, I assure you, I shall take

take it so ill, and be so much concerned, that I shall never sleep a whit the worse for it.

But that I may draw to a close, if any who shall peruse this Discourse, do not understand the Terms of Art herein mentioned, such as *Contre-caveating-Parrades*, *Contre-temps*, *Flanconade*, *Voult-coupee*, *&c.* They may have Recourse to my Book of *Fencing*, Entituled, *The Scots Feneing-Master*, where they will find all these Termes and Lessons explained to the full.

And that I may end as I began, I earnestly entreat and desire, that with *Calmness*, and a *Vigorous Judgement*, you would seriously reflect upon, and consider what I have said, before you pass your Verdict and Opinion, and then I doubt not, but it shall jump very near with my own, which is what I expected and wished for.

ADIEU.

FINIS.

THE SWORD-MAN'S / MEDIUM

THE SWORD-MANS VADE-MECUM